# THE MOUNTAINS OF MOURNE

*Their charm & their people*

Louise McKay

17141640

## A few of many Press Opinions

*Tablet*

There are both pathetic and humorous touches, and anecdotes in plenty.

*Times*

Is full of anecdote and sketches of farmers, village folk, fishermen, fairs, and the folklore of the countryside, and of the hospitality and kindliness of the people.

*Witness*

In happy style she brings us into contact with the people, their habits of thought, and modes of expression, and she has some amusing stories and some weird legends to tell.

*Irish Independent*

It is most readable, very interesting, and quaintly humorous at times. . . . The authoress displays such kindly breadth of view in dealing with her different characters that the book should command a host of readers.

*Northern Whig*

This volume belongs to a very delightful class of books—the books written about some town or district by one who not only loves it and everybody and everything that dwell within its borders, but is intimately in touch with the *genius loci.* There are not too many such books in the English or any other language, and an addition to them is always welcome.

## A few of many Press Opinions

*Freeman's Journal*

Is valuable rather for its minute observation of the manners and customs of Mourne in a time now almost passed away. It is faithful in detail and nothing seems trifling to the loving memory of the chronicler.

*Irish News*

Miss McKay knows her Kingdom of Mourne; its wide spaces thinly peopled, its humble hamlets, its wee towns, its picturesque little capital—all are as dear to her as they are familiar, and she limns with deft hand a kindly and big hearted people, unspoiled in their simplicity, with passions that hurt and worry, but with foibles that amuse.

*Dublin Evening Herald*

It is only an enduring and genuine love that could have brought forth such a delightful little book as "THE MOUNTAINS OF MOURNE." . . . Not only is the scenic beauty of Mourne eloquently described, but the people, their ways and customs, and the older customs as well, are related in a most appealing manner. There is information and interest in every chapter, and the Mourne district is fortunate in having a daughter who can reveal its beauties in so eloquent a manner.

# THE MOUNTAINS OF MOURNE

CRANFIELD, KILKEEL. [*Frontispiece*

# THE MOUNTAINS OF MOURNE

## THEIR CHARM AND THEIR PEOPLE

BY

LOUISE Mc KAY

AUTHOR OF
"THE IRISH AT HOME," "OLD TIME MEMORIES," ETC., ETC.

*"Where the Mountains of Mourne roll down to the sea"*

JARROLDS
PUBLISHERS (LONDON) LTD.

DA
990
.D7
M35
1922

*SECOND IMPRESSION*

*Made and Printed in Great Britain by the London & Norwich Press, Lta.,*
*St. Giles' Works, Norwich.*

# TO YOU

*Who first saw the light under the shadow of the Mountains of Mourne, who have gazed on their heathery slopes when they were adorned in all their purple grandeur. You who have since gone to far-away lands to seek fame and fortune. Whether it be 'mid the silences of the Australian Bushlands, the Sheep Farms of New Zealand or on the great Prairie lands of Canada, or at home, wherever you are, to every mother's son of you, this book is dedicated by*

THE AUTHOR.

*Belfast,*
*November,* 1922.

# THE MOUNTAINS OF MOURNE

## CHAPTER I

There is one spot on earth, how dearly I love it,
'Tis a star that doth beckon wherever I roam,
And my thoughts often wander in loyal devotion
To the home of my childhood—to Kin'ly Mourne.

HOSPITALITY in the true sense is rare, it is not what is given but the manner of giving that matters.

A friend told me lately that when she gave money to the poor, she accompanied the gift by gently pressing the hand of the recipient. That act means more than the gift itself. It is so in Mourne. There one meets with fine native courtesy, a true hospitality—spontaneous and whole-hearted—it is as free as the air from the mountain tops; you seem to inhale it; it is part of the place, you cannot evade it.

Ask anyone there the time of day! A smile lights up the countenance at your request, and if you wish to ascertain at the same time the name of each of the mountains, instantly you are rewarded with data you would fain jot down in your note-book.

Go to the door of a farmhouse (presumably a small one) and if you feel thirsty, ask for a drink; the half-door will be speedily opened, you are invited to step inside. The good woman of the house will withdraw to an adjoining room and bring therefrom a chair—usually made of polished hardwood. This she will carefully dust with the corner of her apron, and ask you "to be seated," with a grace that is all her own. A glass will be polished with a spotless cloth taken from the drawer of the dresser, then—not water—but milk with a goodly proportion of cream will be offered you. If it is churning day, a pitcher of buttermilk will be placed before you. If you should happen to call at tea-time, you will be invited to sit "forrit," all the butter in the house set on the table, all sorts of home-made bread—

> Soda farls and pancake—
> And substantial fresh oatcake,
> With no fal-de-rals or capers,
> You can either leave or take.

"Put forrit your hand" (meaning, help yourself) rings in your ears during the repast. The heartiness of it all appeals to you; it is so very refreshing. When leaving, you are made to understand that you have, by thus partaking of the hospitality offered, given more pleasure than you received.

If you should happen to be on a walking tour and lose your bearings, and are anxious to find your way across country, ask the first person you meet. He or she will go to the greatest possible trouble to right you, and will usually end up with the remark—"I'm not doing much the day, I'll just go along with ye."

You will be entertained on the journey, I assure you; you will get to know the inhabitants of the whole townland through which you pass. You will hear the nicknames of the McCunninghams, the Colgins and the Byrnes, —the whole thing will seem like a fairy tale. You will make slow progress, for every one your companion meets must needs be entertained or enlightened as to your presence there. Other topics will be introduced, such as—"Barney McCrory's cow had a fine calf that morning," or "there was a good catch of herrings the night before."

No one in Mourne thinks of passing any one without a confab or blarney. Conversation of this kind is very refreshing, and when you take leave of your companion you feel you are losing a friend. This and kindred happenings meet you at every turn in Mourne. It is a country of surprises.

Mourne proper begins at the Cassey (Causeway) Water at Killowen side, and ends at the Bloody Bridge below Annalong.

One often hears the expression "The Twelve miles of Mourne." Those enchanting, alluring, once-seen-never-to-be-forgotten twelve miles. Kilkeel, the capital of Mourne, sits right in the centre of her ancient Kingdom, but the Kilkeel I used to know is not the Kilkeel of to-day. Many old landmarks are gone and up-to-date buildings occupy their sites. Nearly all the little whitewashed cottages have long since disappeared.

In memory I see them—see their owners going out and in of their doorways on business or pleasure bent—kindly neighbours—kindly people. In one of these cottages lived Dan Smith, the veteran nailer, who, together with his son, plied the huge bellows and made nails all day long. Dan's forge, which was really part of his kitchen, was a rendezvous for "neighbours all, great and small! from the minister down to the Clerk of the Crown." Each had a look in at Dan in passing, sometimes to talk over an interesting item current at that particular time in the newspapers, oftener to recite a local titbit. Dan's opinion of things in general was given with great deliberation; he was considered a very "knowledgable" man. Dan had been a Freemason from early manhood, and it was a sorrowful day for him when his church forbade his connection with that Society. Dan was high up in

Masonic orders, too, and the pity of it! oh, the pity of it! All had to go, and poor Dan's heart sank low; he became an altered man from that hour. Dan's forge had a great fascination for us children, and when his meal hour came round a little companion and myself usually took possession of the forge. Mounted on creepy stools, we knew our business—knew just how to act. The bellows were kept busy, and the nail rods dashed into the live coals. Very often our rods met—got wedged together, with the result that there was a mighty pulling match, which ended in the capsizing of our stools.

Dan, looking on, never bothered. We fired away, but alas we could manufacture only one sparable, but Dan, the master hand, could strike off three while the iron was hot. All the same, we were able to turn out very respectable nails with massive heads.

Old Denis Keilty, who was watching our manoeuvres, one day, said, "Missy! always strike the nail on the head." Thinking it was the nail in question he referred to, I emphasised his remark by giving the said nail an additional blow. Denis laughed.

Within a few doors of Dan's home lived two very poor women; they occupied the same house, only a wooden partition divid-

ing their abodes, which consisted of one room each. They were always antagonistic to each other, both old, both diverse in character, by name Rose Kilpatrick and Mary Quinn. Rose was a masculine type of person and earned her living by working in the fields for the magnificent sum of 8d. per day. Rose sprang from a good stock of people, a fact of which she did not forget to remind her neighbour on the other side of the partition; she maintained she was "well come home," and that wasn't what every one could say, and usually ended this remark by a wink and a nod in the direction of the said partition wall.

Rose never tired of recounting how on one particular day in harvest time she cut with her hook an unheard-of quantity of corn; there was a fine "breezlin' win" on that day, she said, and that was how she had so many stooks to her credit.

Mary on the other side of the wall, took no interest in field matters; she was a knitter, knitted socks for half the town, for which she was paid 6d. a pair. Mary was a delicate little woman and very lame. She always wore a bobbin pinned to her jacket, in which she held her needle while knitting. She was very poetically inclined, and could recite ballads by the yard, very much in the singsong style one was accustomed to hear

at street corners a few years ago. "Young Lochinvar" was a favourite, as was "Willy Reilly and his dear Colleen Bawn."

In memory I see her sitting knitting, see the needle clinking in and out of her bobbin, her chin meanwhile raised higher than usual while she recited in lordly style—

"Oh! rise up, Willy Reilly, and come along with me,
I mean for to go with you and leave this counterie,
To leave my father's dwelling-house, his houses and free land;
And away goes Willy Reilly and his dear Colleen Bawn.

They go by hills and mountains, and by yon lonesome plain,
Through shady groves and valleys all dangers to refrain;
But her father followed after with a well-arm'd band,
And taken was poor Reilly and his dear Colleen Bawn.

It's home then she was taken, and in her closet bound,
Poor Reilly all in Sligo jail lay on the stony ground,
'Till at the bar of justice before the judge he'd stand,
For nothing but the stealing of his dear Colleen Bawn.

The jailer's son to Reilly goes, and thus to him did say,
'Oh! get up, Willy Reilly, you must appear this day,
For great Squire Ffoillart's anger you never can withstand,
I'm afear'd you'll suffer sorely for your dear Colleen Bawn.'

Now Willy's dress'd from top to toe all in a suit of green,
His hair hangs o'er his shoulders most glorious to be seen ;
He's tall and straight and comely as any could be found,
He's fit for Foillard's daughter, was she heiress to a crown.

'This is the news, young Reilly, last night that I did hear,
The lady's oath will hang you, or else will set you clear' ;
'If that be so,' says Reilly, 'her pleasure I will stand,
Still hoping to be succoured by my dear Colleen Bawn.'

. . . . .

The lady with a tear began, and thus replied she,—
'The fault is none of Reilly's, the blame lies all on me ;
I forced him for to leave his place and come along with me,
I loved him out of measure, which wrought our destiny.'

. . . . .

Then out spoke noble Fox, 'You may let the prisoner go,
The lady's oath has cleared him, as the jury all may know ;
She has released her own true love, she has renewed his name,
May her honour bright gain high estate, and her offspring rise to fame ! "

"Listen to that woman," came from the other side of the wall.

Mary had many old yarns to relate, one of which was about a man who had banks and banks of money. In my youthful vision I associated those banks with the shore banks. Anyhow, the men in question had so much money the banks couldn't hold it all. As I sat listening to Mary I wondered if the Horse Pound Glen banks were filled up with money too.

Rose and Mary have long since disappeared off the stage of life; old feuds, likewise the bobbin and the day of the "breezlin win'" are forgotten.

In those early days nicknames were given *ad lib.* and no one objected to be called by a name other than his own. The then postmaster answered to the pseudonym of "By the holy fly." This individual had the unfortunate habit of using this preface to all his remarks.

The "Half Yard" was a title belonging to a diminutive tailor, and in his case was singularly appropriate.

One other tailor was christened "The Steam Tailor," as he was the first to introduce the sewing machine into the town. A very emaciated youth who was always flying about, answered to the name of "Split the Wind." A local butcher when trying to sell a leg of lamb on one occasion to the ladies of The Manor House was said to

have remarked that the lamb in question was "Odious good." "Odious good" was applied to the butcher ever after.

There was "Pat the Egg" and "Pat the Rag," both of whom were merchants in their respective callings, Eggs and Rags. The sexton, a universal favourite, was christened "The Anointed Fellow," and anointed he looked, (arrayed in flowing robes) as he stood just inside the church door on Sunday mornings. At that time the church boasted of two clergymen, both of whom were extremists, different as the poles. The elder of the two was a courtly gentleman of the olden school, very learned; his sermon, which was always a written one, lasted three-quarters of an hour. I occupied that time counting the little diamond panes in the windows, while my elders were engaged, if not in counting window panes, in counting something else. The younger clergyman was much livelier in his discourse, he had a predilection for describing the unutterable horrors of "the last day." None of Doré's paintings could depict that day as he did. The whole thing appealed to my childish imagination. I could see with vividness the rocks falling, the brimstone, the flames, the earthquake. There was no counting the window panes during that sermon—the church was on fire.

## CHAPTER II

THE yearly advent of the caravan containing McCormick's show was a great event. The servant girls and boys from Derryogue to Attical, for that matter, from all over Mourne, patronised the show. The said show was run by McCormick, his wife and their two daughters.

Mary Ann McCormick was considered a star of great magnitude, she was said to be the best dancer of her time, besides being an actress of the first water! She was the possessor of a really "powerful" voice, and her songs were much in demand. She usually gave for an encore—

*My Love Nell.*

My Love Nell was a charming girl
From the Cove of Cork came she.
I wept and I wailed as the big ship sailed
For the shores of Ameriky.

This song brought down the house. Looking back after the lapse of many years, the plots seem ridiculously slow and tame. I remember the bill on the boards for one week was "Engaging a Servant," the appli-

cant, a modern "Peter Simple," did everything contrary to orders. The culminating point in the play was reached, when Peter, after his engagement, was sent by his new mistress for a light (a candle), Peter stayed an unconscionably long time, and at length rushed in exclaiming, that "John McConville (the butcher) would not give him the light without the liver."

This joke elicited roars of laughter, cheers and kentish fire, the reverberation of which shook the boards of the old caravan.

The charge of admission was one penny, and as a result, we children were well in evidence, so much so, that when the McCormicks had left the town, we were accomplished enough to get up a show of our own, which we held in McIntyre's yard. The said yard was the size of a small village, and had no end of resources. I remember we kept to the play we knew best—"Peter Simple"!

The McIntyres were Scotch folk and allowed us children full scope. Mrs. McIntyre, the soul of good nature, lent her Paisley shawl for a drop screen. We had everything up-to-date, a miniature platform, and for a band an asthmatic concertina. When everything was ready we went round the town in order to gather our audience, which consisted of ragmen and tinkers'

children, and others of that class. We had a system too, there was method in our madness, for each "man" had to give a pin for admission to the collector, Jim McIntyre, at the door. Then the fun began. McCormick's show wasn't in it. I remember when the play was over we had great difficulty in getting our audience to clear out.

Co-operative stores were not in evidence in those days, yet the business run by the McIntyres could (for a variety show) outrival any Co.'s of to-day. As I've said, their yard was the size of a small village, and they could at a moment's notice cater for a wedding or a funeral. Cars were the correct thing then for weddings—I've seen as many as seven jaunting cars in a marriage procession. True, they could not supply glass hearses; their's were of a more substantial build—ponderous looking hearses with rockets on top, one in each corner, white rockets for the unmarried, and black for elderly people. These rockets looked very imposing and at the same time awe-inspiring.

The McIntyres had many branches in their business. They gave out yarn to be woven into webs, and did a big trade in that line. They even grew the flax. In memory I see old Mr. McIntyre examining

the webs of linen with a goggle stuck on to his eye, the weaver standing by meanwhile, like a culprit, bearing all abuse quietly, if the said linen was not properly woven. The McIntyres were licensed to sell spirits, beer and porter, and tubs of porter were now and then to be seen in the yard ready for bottling. When opportunity offered, we sailed miniature boats in full rig over the same porter.

You could get the very latest thing in millinery and dresses at McIntyre's. Old Mrs. McIntyre managed the grocery end of the business, while Andy, the son and heir, had charge of the leather-cutting department. Hardware of all kinds was to be had at the store, likewise grass seed, flax seed, and almost every kind of seed. No, the Co's. of to-day are not in it with the McIntyres of yesterday. There was one place, however, in McIntyre's establishment we were not allowed to enter, it was named the "Good Room," and was forbidden ground. "The Good Room" was situated on the first floor, and from its window could be had an incomparable view of the mountains. Nowadays the "Good Room" would bear the title of "drawing room," but the McIntyres were practical people. Nevertheless, we had a peep into the "Good Room" now and then while some one kept

watch on the stairs. We knew all it contained. It was a modern Aladdin's palace to our youthful eyes, with its rich carpet, green ground studded with pink rosebuds. Facing the door, stood an antique cabinet, on the top of which was displayed a glittering show of silver articles; but in our estimation, all this grandeur was not to be compared with the basket of fruit modelled in wax, which stood in the centre. Certainly, that basket was a very tempting affair! Antimacassars of various patterns decorated each chair back. I remember there was a papier-maché table inlaid with mother o' pearl, at the window. On it stood a large stuffed duck. I never heard the history of that duck. What meritorious act did it accomplish or was it of royal lineage that it should occupy such a prominent position? The "piece de resistance," however, to our minds, was the piano. It was an old time affair with spindle legs, nevertheless, it was a real piano. I remember one of our party actually penetrated into the "Good Room" on one occasion and struck a note on the old-time instrument, then we grew bolder, and each of us had a "go" at it, with the result that the door of Aladdin's palace was locked for a long time afterwards. Later, during a severe thunderstorm we were allowed into

the "Good Room" to view what perhaps city-bred people have never seen, viz., the lightning playing over the mountains. It seemed for the moment as if they were on fire, as flash after flash lit up the top of Bingian and the lofty peaks beyond—the sight was awesome in the extreme. We were standing at the window (around the precious duck), Andy McIntyre in our midst, with watch in hand, counting the seconds between the flashes and the peals of thunder, and such thunder! Came flash on flash, roll on roll, while the deluge of rain, as it can rain in the Mourne district, obliterated our view, till the lightning torches came again and dispelled the gloom for a second; it was all so fascinating and uncanny—yet in a short space of time the clouds cleared off, and the mountains, bathed in the rays of the setting sun, assumed their normal aspect.

It is a far cry back to that afternoon. In the interval how many changes have taken place? all the McIntyres are dead and gone, the yard is rebuilt, and the house itself, with its "Good Room," has long since disappeared, a large house now standing on its site. No trace of the old homestead is left—all is gone—but where is the duck?

Within a short distance of McIntyre's,

lived a family named Lockhart. Mr. Lockhart held a government situation, and besides being a clever man in law business, he was an authority on every known subject. It was a common saying when a knotty point arose (in course of conversation) which no man present at the moment could solve, "Ask Mr. Lockhart," and Mr. Lockhart always unravelled the mystery from his well-stored brain. He was an antiquarian. He knew everything worth knowing. Very pleasant looking was he—it seemed to me at the time that the sun always shone on his face. He was a man of action too, always on the move. Perhaps he would be explaining the names of the mountains and might get the length of telling you that Knock Cree means "Hill of my heart," and when you were prepared for further data he would have gone elsewhere. He had a habit of inserting his thumbs inside the armpits of his waistcoat and in that position would walk about for hours. He had a striking personality and when he passed away I asked, as did many others, "How shall the place get on without him?"

The Lockharts, one and all, were a musical family. In memory I see old Mrs. Lockhart, a refined gentle-woman, sitting in the parlour with her family, singing an

old-time melody, perhaps a coon song. Mr. Lockhart often dropped in at these times and joined in the singing, perhaps in the chorus, and then as suddenly cleared off again.

The Lockharts knew the latest songs—no local concert was complete without their co-operation. It seemed to me at the time that "Castle Lockhart" (as we jokingly christened their home) was a place where the lark, the linnet and the thrush took up their abode; it was unlike any other house. To my little mind it savoured of Heaven, for 'twas there I heard the Angels' song!

A little higher up the street at that time lived a frail old body named Fanny Morris. Fanny kept a sweetie shop, and although her shop was very diminutive, the bottles containing the lozenges in her microscopic window were very large. Fanny had the art of arranging her wares to advantage; there was no getting past that window if one had a penny, or for that matter, a halfpenny, in one's pocket. Fanny's sugar stuff was very alluring. I remember on one occasion standing before her window trying to make up my mind concerning a purchase—I had a halfpenny in my pocket—my choice lay in the direction of a bottle containing gaily-coloured sugar stick, black,

red and striped stuff. For the moment the choosing business was the most important thing in the world. Finally, after due deliberation I walked inside, bang went the halfpenny, the black stick had it.

Fanny was an oddity in her way, very strange looking was she, and the great white cap she wore with its immense frills seemed to accentuate the weirdness of her little face.

If I had been older I would certainly have asked how it came about that Fanny ever got a husband, but children take no notice of these things. In after years I heard all about Fanny's marriage. It appears that Jacky Morris, who afterwards became her husband, was a gay spark in his youth, and was very fond of the bottle. In those days the bottle took the place of the teapot; anyhow, Jacky was a frequent visitor at Fanny's father's, and by all accounts the decanter was seldom or ever off their table, a fact that drew the Kilkeel sports to that abode very frequently. On one particular night there had been a considerable quantity of spirits consumed (whiskey at that time was 4½d. for two glasses). When the fun was at its height, it was proposed by some joker that Jacky should marry Fanny. Now, Jacky was a clean, well-set-up, young fellow, a great boxer, and a general

favourite. Fanny was a poor specimen of a wife for such as he, anyhow; the sports plied Jacky with whiskey, and three or four wheel cars were got ready. Fanny was assisted (not unwillingly) on to a car, and the wedding party started for Cranfield to the residence of the Rev. McIlwain about midnight. Jacky had been kept well under the influence of liquor all the while, and when the pair were presented to the clergyman Jacky was totally unaware who it was that was about to be married; however, the ceremony was gone on with, and Jacky and Fanny were duly wed. The journey back to Fanny's father's was fast and furious. There they regaled themselves with punch, etc. Next morning Jacky found himself in feminine company, and so bewildered and frightened was he that he was preparing to make for home, when Fanny assured him they were married the night before. Jacky then for the first time realised that he was a married man. As may be imagined, the bottle was well in evidence during that day, and in the evening wheel cars arrived and transported Jacky and Fanny to Jacky's home in Kilkeel, where they lived very happily, neither having cause to regret their midnight marriage.

## CHAPTER III

KILKEEL has altered much in the interval. Few, if any, tourists found their way there at the time of which I write. Harry Doran's glass bus ran to Warrenpoint every morning for the convenience of business people, commercial travellers, and those attending fairs, etc., while a car went daily to Newcastle. I remember our taking pos session of the glass bus after it was housed in the yard of the Kilmorey Arms Hotel, the only hotel in Kilkeel at that time. Mr. Needham, the then proprietor of the Kilmorey Arms, was a bland old gentleman, rather corpulent, who usually sported a tall hat and white waistcoat, over which dangled a heavy gold chain with massive seals. He was invariably to be found in the neighbourhood of the hall-door to welcome the "Commercial Gentlemen" as they were styled in those days.

I remember seeing a member of Parliament come to the hotel on one occasion. Everyone knew of his coming and everyone had his or her head out of the door to get a peep at such a distinguished visitor. Mr.

Needham was equal to the occasion, however, and that was saying a great deal. There was a special carpet laid over the flagstones of the hall and a special bow from Mr. Needham awaited the arrival of the august stranger. Mr. Needham was said to be the best maker of punch in Mourne. He certainly knew the art of polishing a glass to perfection; this done, the warming process took place. A pot of blackcurrant jam many years old (he believed in maturing jam) was introduced. Then a muddler was procured, and the art of mixing the punch to a nicety was proceeded with. This beverage was made on special occasions only and for very special people such as the Curate and a magistrate or two. At such times spicy jokes (wise and otherwise) were on the boards. Usually the parlour-maid found it convenient to be about the door during these convivialities, and never failed to apply a listening ear to the keyhole. I happened to be in the hotel kitchen on one of these occasions and heard her regale the servants with a glowing account of what was happening in the parlour. It seemed that Mr. Needham, who was serving the punch, remarked, that a few days previous two members of the R.I.C., who had been on escort duty to Rathfriland, were returning home by way of the mountain

road. Feeling tired and thirsty, they entered a lonely cabin (a little removed from the main road) which was inhabited by an old woman—Rosy McSherry by name. Rosy kept a shebeen, a fact that was well known to the police, but "rules" were not strictly enforced in those early days, and Rosy was left unmolested. On entering the cabin, Her Majesty's officers demanded two glasses of whiskey, hot—poor Rosy looked for all the world as if the last day had arrived, and in a tremulous voice replied: "It's what I never sell, gentlemen." "Come, come!" said one of the officers, "we are off duty now and we require a drink badly." Rosy hesitated for a moment. Then looking the officer squarely in the face, said: "Well, sir, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll charge you fourpence a glass for the hot water and I'll give you the whiskey in for nothing." The officers accepted her offer, and as a matter of course they paid for a great deal of hot water before they left.

Mr. Needham averred that Rosy had a distillery of her own, that is, a private still, in the mountains. Be that as it may, Rosy was able to produce a drop of the "Crathur" to all comers, at any hour, of day or night.

One other story heard in this way was

about an old gentleman in the neighbourhood who will be nameless. He had the misfortune to be "head over ears" in debt—so much so, that the bailiff had a writ in his pocket to serve on him (for a long time). The old gentleman, knowing this, took good care not to walk abroad, but confined himself to his house and garden, which was surrounded by a high wall. It was his custom to take exercise there at a certain hour of the day. The bailiff being aware of the old man's movements, by some means known to himself, deposited in the garden a trap for his poor victim. At his usual hour the old man strolled out. The bailiff at the same time took up his position on the branch of an overhanging tree, from which place he could see what was about to happen. After walking about for some time, the old gentleman espied something unusual lying in the grass. On going to the spot, he was delighted to find a goose egg, which he promptly lifted—but alas! the egg proved hollow! save that a neatly folded paper lay inside which proved to be the dreaded writ. At this juncture the bailiff cried out from his seat on the tree: "How do you like your egg, your Honour?"

The parlourmaid then cleared off to resume her duties, ostensibly about the

parlour door. Later, she was reciting to her companions in the kitchen what proved to be the funniest story of all. Unfortunately (for me) it was a story I never heard. It was told in a whisper which elicited roars of laughter from the cook, who held her sides in a paroxysm of merriment. The perspiration kept dropping off her face as she writhed and twisted her ample body at the screamingly funny joke.

When the housemaid heard it she shrieked in a hysterical sort of way, suggestive of going up the scale to high C, if one might describe it thus. Whatever could all the merriment mean ?

Occasionally the whispering grew louder, then I heard the word "Hush"! That had something to do with me I knew. I crept closer, but no ! I was instantly waved back to my seat. Then, childlike, I caught the infection and laughed with the others. To an outsider the scene was suggestive of a drunken orgy. The housemaid, who was staggering about, laughing all the while, tripped and fell over a chair (the others were unable to assist her), where she lay laughing, laughing on. Then the cook began to hiccup, which added immensely to the fun. At this stage Mr. Needham (whose call for hot water was unheeded, or I should say, unheard) stood in the doorway. Picture

the consternation of the domestics at the moment—if you can!

The next in importance to Mr. Needham at the Kilmorey Arms was "His Reverence." His Reverence was a half-witted individual. No one knew exactly how he came by his title. Anyhow, he passed a good deal of his time about the hotel. He breakfasted there, and in several other houses as well. He was very useful, for in each of the houses he visited he did odd jobs such as cleaning boots, and certainly he could polish boots well. It was strange, yet true, that His Reverence was never known to place the pairs together in the ordinary way. He always reversed them.

His Reverence was an Orangeman (or thought he was) and if the only qualification necessary was to wear a sash on "th' twelfth," he merited the title of which he was justly proud. I remember that when any one struck up the tune of "The Protestant Boys," his excitement ran high—so much so that he would dance about and end up by shaking the crook vigorously. I recollect on one occasion the townspeople collected the price of a suit of clothes for him. He was very careful of his new "rig-out"—so much so that on wet days he turned his coat inside out, and wore his

waist-coat on top. He carried the moor cloth at funerals, and although he could neither read nor write he was able to find the Psalm read on these occasions, for the minister. He acted as Chief Mourner at these times. Very devout was he for the moment. His responses were very fervent, and his loud Amen could be heard all over the churchyard.

His Reverence always carried a stick, and some mischievous boys cut a certain emblem on it on one occasion. This malefaction His Reverence could not tolerate. I remember seeing him throw his stick in front of him, keep throwing it and follow it up for miles until he was completely exhausted. Then he broke the stick in two and buried it.

Something of a musical genius was Paddy Tanny, another daft individual, who belonged to Rostrevor, and who used to walk the eight long miles from there to Kilkeel, choosing for his rambles the still hours of night, preferably moonlit nights. When he was afoot the night was made melodious with song. I remember as a child being awakened out of sleep by Paddy's singing. His song was composed by himself. He seemed to have caught the lilt of the lark and the piping notes of the thrush, commingled with the twitterings of the other

birds, a combination from which he produced the most exquisite music which, heard at the dead of night when all the earth was still and the bright moon shining overhead, mingled with the murmur of the plashing waves, left a memory not easily forgotten.

## CHAPTER IV

Mourne folk are said to keep a shrewd eye on the main chance, and are a match for most people in a bargain. That may be, I know not. One thing I do know, that, where intellect, education and innate refinement count, Mourne people excel.

Take a Mourne person of, say, middle-class society, place that person alongside another of same social standing—city bred or otherwise. You will find the Mourne person far ahead of his compatriot. There are several of the class named, i.e., well-to-do farmers and shop-keepers, who can boast of having M.A. or B.A. attached to the name of one member at least of their family. It is no uncommon sight to see a Latin Grammar, a copy of *Virgil*, perhaps Pope's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, on their book shelves.

A traveller representing a large book firm in the City told me that he sold more classics in Kilkeel than in any town four times its size in Ireland. The ordinary seafaring folk, the peasant farmers, the artisan class, all show decided superiority when compared with the same class elsewhere.

Nothing in the way of an innovation takes them by surprise, they live abreast of the times, and are, in their class, undoubtedly ahead of city folk. Is it the beautiful in Nature, the spirit of the mountains, or the mystery of the sea, or all three, that has illuminated their minds? Who can say?

At the older part of Kilkeel near the ancient Church, which, by the way, was built in the tenth century, stood a building known as Brookbank Academy. The pupils who attended it were of the higher middle-class such as clergymen's, magistrates' and traders' children. Brookbank Academy has turned out many brilliant scholars, men and women, now filling responsible positions in their own land and in distant countries. A volume, indeed, might be written on their achievements.

One pupil, who became a celebrated surgeon in the Metropolis, passed away there a few months ago. In his profession he was brilliant beyond the telling, but it was his kindly acts that endeared him to the populace. He gave his services gratuitously in many cases; where poverty reigned he exacted no fee. The poor in the slums of Dublin loved him, and when he lay dying —words come slowly—prayers were being offered up in the Convents for his recovery.

Although he himself was not of that persuasion, priests were not slow in acknowledging his worth. Father —— said, "If ever a man gained Heaven, he, the Doctor* had." Why this eulogium? Why? Because his heart was in the right place—kin'ly son of kin'ly Mourne.

Others have gained high distinction abroad. One at the present moment fills the important position of deputy governor of Victoria, while another takes rank amongst the six most popular business-men in Sydney, which has a population, to-day, of seven hundred thousand.

This goes to prove that Mourne people are fitted by nature, grace and ability of a high order, to fill any position and fill it well.

Kilkeel was well ahead of other towns (of its size) in the way of intellectual treats of various kinds. I remember there was a series of Readings—"Penny Readings"—held in the Courthouse during the winter months. The admission was one penny. Each of the then magnates of the town gave a ten minutes' reading, taken from standard works, such as Dickens, Charles Lever, Sir Walter Scott and others. These readings were very enjoyable and edifying to the youthful mind and were well attended by all sects and classes.

* Dr. Frederic Woods.

The memory of one entertainment held in the Courthouse stands out before all others. A broken down artist, a clairvoyant named Bosco, visited Kilkeel on one occasion He was "down on his luck," so much so, that he elicited the sympathy of the townspeople. I remember Doctor Anderson (whose name will live for ever) distributed tickets all over Mourne (I forget what the admission was) for an evening with Bosco, and a delightful evening it proved to be. General Chesney and the ladies from the Manor House sat in the front seat. I recollect Bosco ask General Chesney for his silk hat which the General promptly handed him. Fancy the General's dismay when he saw Bosco take a number of eggs, break and pour them into his silk hat. Bosco then asked one of the ladies for an article of jewellery. Miss Jane, of the Manor House, took a valuable ring from her finger and handed it to him. Bosco dropped the ring into the General's hat and stirred up the contents. The result was, the ring got lost, or at least Bosco said so. Miss Jane was not to be consoled over the loss. "It was a keepsake," she said. Bosco sympathised with her, and then, by way of accident, turned the hat upside down, and lo! instead of eggs he took therefrom a beautiful bunch of flowers, and hanging to

the stem of a rose was the missing ring. Both were presented to Miss Jane who, in accepting them, smiled through her tears. Needless to say, the General's hat was none the worse for the experience. Thus Bosco was cheered on his way, his heart made lighter, his purse heavier, when leaving the shores of "Kin'ly Mourne."

The most important person in Mourne at that time was Thomas Gibson, J.P., of "The Manor House." Being the senior Magistrate (usually styled "His Worship") he occupied a very important position as the agent for the Mourne Estate. Very handsome and distinguished looking was he, especially so when on horseback. He usually rode a white cob.

I remember one afternoon, we children were invited by Miss Jane, his daughter, to the Manor House for apples. We were bountifully supplied and coming down the long avenue with our baskets of fruit on our arms we met "His Worship" on horseback. We saw him smile as he approached. He had a habit (when in good form) of protruding his under lip. Intending to frighten us, he pulled up and demanded in a loud voice,

"Where did you get those apples?"

Our little piping voices replied in chorus,

"From Miss Jane, sir."

He looked for all the world as if he were about to put us in his pocket. Then he rode round us as if he were taking a city, but we were not the least alarmed. Children are the best judges of character, and we saw beneath his pretence of anger, his kindliness and good humour. Then he made his cob go thrice round us and with a crack of the whip and a bright smile on his face he rode away. His Worship was very exacting and his attitude towards those he considered his inferiors would not in these days be tolerated, but underneath his brusqueness beat a kind heart. He was never known to oppress the widow, nor would he ever suffer a family bereft of its breadwinner to be turned out of the homestead.

To young and old, Miss Jane, his daughter, stood for all that was lovely and gracious. What little excursions she used to plan for us! One of my earliest recollections is of a bazaar originated by Miss Jane and her sisters, the first of its kind seen in Mourne. Never shall I forget the Christmas tree laden with all that goes to make a child happy. The gaily coloured tarlatan bags containing sweets, hung on slender boughs, in short, to youthful eyes, that bazaar was a veritable fairyland.

The annual party for Sunday School children was a great event, and on the day

appointed we all repaired in a state of intense excitement to the Courthouse. The ceremony of prize-giving was part of the programme. I remember hearing my name called and the thrill of pride, beyond all telling, that possessed me as I walked up the floor with head erect to receive my first prize—a book entitled, *Susan Gray*. I have it still, a volume about the size of an ordinary pass book, costing only a few pence. Nevertheless, no king ever received his crown with half the pride that I did my *Susan Gray*. The said prize was for good attendance on Sunday mornings. In memory I see that class room. There was a beautiful greenery at the back, and in summer the door was always open. There the butterflies flitted around; there the sun, to my mind, shone brighter than in any other place. There the little birds hopped about and sang their morning songs in the lilac bushes, and from there I could see the stretch of road that led to the sea whither my inclinations followed.

# CHAPTER V

GREENCASTLE, the one time capital of Mourne, is now a tiny village of some score of whitewashed houses nestling on the shores of Carlingford Lough. The scene is one of picturesque beauty. Picture a long winding stretch of sunlit water from the south shore of which the Carlingford mountains rise up almost perpendicularly. From the County Down side of the water a wide grassy plain, dotted here and there with cosy homesteads, stretches away to the base of the beautiful mountains o' Mourne, changeless, yet ever changing. Where could have been found a more exquisite setting for an Irish Fair ? That wonderful Fair !

" Who has e'er had the luck to see Greencastle Fair
A Mourneman all in his glory was there."

To try to do justice to the Fair (which dates back to Pagan times), would mean to lay aside this pen in despair. Old women and men can best do that because it was the one day in all the year to them, because their early memories are clustered around the gay doings enacted there. How the old

women love to talk of it yet, and tell their children's children all about the glories of the wonderful Fair. The last one held there was forty years ago, or thereabouts. The Fair of to-day is a very solemn affair compared with what it was half a century ago, when fun and frolic was the order of the day. The Fair was held on the 12th August,* and on that morning from early dawn the roads were crowded with people for the Fair—not only the roads (and all roads led to the Fair), but the sea too was dotted with boats and yawls filled to overflowing with Cooly people from the Louth shores of the Lough. There was great sport and rivalry amongst the boatmen, each trying to outdo his neighbour in the matter of speed, and calling gaily to each other as they sailed past.

There were tents to no end. Each tent had two doors, and it was usually inside the tents that the dancing took place, the music being supplied by Irish Pipers, Fiddlers and Fifers. Each tent had its own musician—oh, the glory of it all! Prizes were given for the best dancers of Jigs, Reels, and Hornpipes, and although the Cooly people were experts in dancing, it was usually a Mourne person who carried off the prize. Jugglers, Gipsy Vans and Astrologers

* In early days there was also a Winter Fair held.

were well represented. Wood turners were there, selling wooden spoons, noggins, trenchers and churns. There were brogue makers, woollen merchants, and travelling tinkers. For refreshments there was plenty of whiskey and poteen, and from stalls, cake and gingerbread, to which the boys and their colleens would repair during the interval of the dances. Many a "Match" was made at the Fair. No wonder the old people like to talk about it yet. The fun and frolic lasted well into the following morning, when the patiently waiting horses and donkeys would start upon the return journey, and by this time they had to lead their masters home.

I remember (when a child) being taken by Captain and Miss Janns on their car to Greencastle Fair. I think it was the last Fair but one held.

I recollect seeing Aunt Sally; Aunt Sally was a model in sand, gaily decorated with sea shells; she sported a clay pipe and the boys found great fun in throwing stones at Aunt Sally's pipe.

When visiting Mourne very many years after, I drove out to Greencastle, the site of the once-famous Fair. I dismissed my car for a time, and sat down to ponder over yesterday, o'er the glories, passed away. In fancy I saw the revelry of old—the tents,

the good-natured, kindly people who danced to the tune of the Fiddler, nearly all of whom, alas! have since danced off the stage of life, and to-day, the anniversary of the Fair, all is quiet as the grave. No sound strikes the ear, save the low moaning at the Bar, the booming of the Buoy in the Lough—a note now and then from a seagull as he lazily flies o'er the sunlit water, and the chirp, chirp of a little robin that pecks through the sand at my feet.

Thinking still of yesterday, I find to-day oppressively still by contrast. Oh! the pity of it all!

I was interrupted in my reverie by some one bidding me:

"Good-day."

The speaker, an old woman bent with age, smiled as she added:

"You'll be just resting yourself, Miss."

I noted she was carrying a heavy basket carefully covered on top with a red pocket handkerchief.

I replied pleasantly to her question, and taking it for granted that I was pleased to meet her, she shyly seated herself beside me and deposited her basket at her feet.

By way of apology she said:

"I was down there at Ballyardle Post Office for my groceries and it's a long walk for an old woman like me."

"Have you far to go?" I queried.

"Oh, just about a quarter of a mile up the road; if you'll stand up I'll show you where my cottage lies beyont in the bushes. My old man is away cutting turf in the mountains the day, an' so I'm in no hurry home. You're from the city, Miss, are you?" she queried.

Upon assuring her that I was, she continued:—"I would fair die in a city, Miss, I would! Give me God's fresh air that comes pure and sweet from the mountain tops. God help the poor craturs that has to swallow smoke all their lives, but it's all in usage—it's all in usage." After a pause she said:

"Isn't the sea lovely, Miss? the Lord help us, many's the time I slip out at dusk and come away down here, I love to look at the water when I am all-me-lone. I've had a lot of trouble in my time," she added, "and someway I think the sea knows all about it. Many's the seat I take behind yon whins, many's the tale I tell to the sea, an' would you believe it, Miss? my bothers seem at them times to go out with the tide, an' I feel better when I leave it. It seems to me there's a lot in nature to help a body, but it takes ye to have the seein' eye an' the hearin' ear. Sometimes I get comfort from looking at the mountains, sometimes

even from a tree. An' there's a wee voice in the wind that speaks to me—it wants to tell me there is something grander ahead for us all—something better than this weariful life of ours. I am but a poor unlearned woman," she added, "but I think we miss a lot by not taking comfort from things round about us. Did you ever notice, Miss, that everything grows quiet-like, the leaves come on to the trees silently, the crops grow the same, an' it's only ourselves, poor craturs, that makes all the noise."

I looked at my chance acquaintance, I thought her unusual—one in the know of things—one who walks alone—and to my mind it is only to those who walk alone that the seeing eye and hearing ear are given.

By way of digression, I asked:

"Have you ever been to the Fair?"

"Have I ever been at the Fair? I should say so. The Lord help us, it's goin' on for sixty years since I won my prize for dancing at the Fair. Did you ever hear word of Tom McCarton (Dancing Tom) from Longstone, Ballymartin? Well, he was my partner that day, the Cooly people are gran' dancers, an' they tried for the prize, but Dancing Tom an' me won it—we danced on boards an' when we finished up, you ought to hear the cheers an' the hand-clapping of the Mourne people. Would you think an

old woman like me ever danced in her life ? Many's the fair I danced at—many's the good day I had here in the long ago—an' when I sit whiles beyont in the whins I think over it all." She paused for a time, when I heard her sigh, and there was a tender note in her voice as she continued. "It was at the Fair I met the one man I loved. He belonged to Carlingford, but had settled down at Mourne Park, he was a keeper there—I wish, Miss, you could have seen him; Jim McGivern was his name. He stood six feet high an' as straight as a rush. As I was saying, I seen him first at the Fair. Dancing Tom introduced us an' right enough it was a case of love at first sight. Then Jim asked me for a sail : the Lord help us, I could have sailed round the world with him. Many's the one said that day we were the handsomest pair at the Fair. I was only eighteen, an' he had turned twenty-two—well that day was the beginning of things for me. We kept company for twelve months or more, then Jim was offered a good post in Americky. He was loth to go an' leave me, but I would not stand in his way, so away he went to better his fortune. I promised to be his wife and was to go out to him in a year's time—so I began to get things together. Them times, —I mean the getting ready times, were the

best part of my life. I think they are the best part of every woman's life. I had a letter from Jim from New York,—letters came slow in them times—he said in it that he had three days' journey to go after he left New York. So some months went by. One day (I'll never forget it) I was churnin' in the kitchen, it was a beautiful day, bright and sunny. As I said, I was churnin' and singin' away to myself, when our clergyman walked in—he broke the news to me as well as he could—word had come to him that day that Jim was killed in a railway smash in Americky some weeks before. I heard the news like one dazed; I said nothing, but putting my churn in the corner, I crept up to my own wee room. I wanted to die, but we can't die when we want to, and do you know, Miss, I wondered how the sun could shine or the birds could sing? But everything went on as before, so forty years went by, and by that time everybody belonging to me had died out, one after another, an' I was left all-me-lone in the world. Just then a very decent widow man who lived close by asked me to marry him, an' you'll hardly believe it, Miss, but I did, an' I'm comfortable. I could not give him love,—that's buried—but I respect him, an' he's good an' kind to me."

After a pause, during which her thoughts

were dwelling in the past, she said, "You should have heard Jim sing, he used to sing 'Robin Adair,' but the song he liked best was 'The Maid of Mourne Shore'—I have min' of the first verse.

"Our ship now lies at Warrenpoint,
For Boston we set sail;
I wish her safely o'er the foam,
With a sweet and pleasant gale.
Had I a hundred pounds in gold,
Or had I ten times more,
I'd leave it all with Mary Bawn,
The maid of Mourne shore."

"Do you happen to know the story," I asked.

"I do for certain, Miss, but here's Mr. McCreanor, the schoolmaster, comin' along,—he's a second cousin o' my man's—he'll tell you all about it." Before I had time to interpose, she cried out—"Mr. McCreanor. Hi! Mr. McCreanor."

That worthy came slowly along. With true native courtesy my chance acquaintance introduced me and asked him to tell me the story of the Maid of Mourne Shore. There was no mistaking the fact that "Schoolmaster" was written all over Mr. McCreanor.

Removing his hat with a courtly air, and in a high-pitched voice, he began—

## CHAPTER VI

"On the shores of Mill-Bay near to this spot, there stood in the days of the Fair, an old-established and well-known hostelry named the 'Wheatsheaf Inn,' which was owned and run by a man called John MacCeon, who was also the miller of Mill-Bay, and owner of the 'Mullian,' which gave name to the inlet, his mill giving work to the men of the place, who lived in a row of whitewashed thatched cabins close by, which fronted on the Mullion Loughan, with their beautiful flowery gardens before their doors, and it might with truth be sa'd that the little village was the mill, and the mill was the little village, as it gave them all employment, though near by them lived a number of fishermen, who sailed out into the Irish Sea in their lug-sailed vessels to cast their nets or trawl and take a rich harvest from the mighty deep—a treacherous and relentless giant at times they found it, with whom they had to fight hard and wrestle long, to wring a livelihood from its dark mysterious depths.

"They knew by long experience all its

varying moods and tempers; its sounds were ever in their ears, in fine weather lapping gently the sandy shore of Mill-Bay, as harmless as an infant, but when aroused by the rough winds it swirled fiercely up the beach, and lashed the coast with fury, and sometimes caught their fishing vessels at sea, destroying them with pitiless cruelty. Such tragedies happened frequently, but still it must be faced to win them bread, and when anything happened to the fishers, it must be said that the 'Miller of Mill-Bay' was first to bring relief to their widows and orphans.

"At this time his wife was dead, and his only child, Mary, had taken her place in the house, and attended the bar, being well known to people coming to the Fair, and the acknowledged belle of the place, the famous melody, 'The Maid of Mourne Shore,' having been composed in her honour by a local poet, who emigrated to America, and who was one of her numerous admirers.

"On a January Greencastle Fair Day Eve, she was born now nearly twenty-one years gone by, and an old astrologer, who had come to the Fair to foretell events and spay people's fortunes, was stopping at the Wheatsheaf Inn at the time, and on being informed of the event, he arose and wrapping his cotamore around him, went out in the night, cast her horoscope and studied the planets

for some time. Then coming indoors he wrote his message from the skies, on a slip of parchment, and sewed it up in a little satchel, telling nobody what the fates had in store for her, but giving the little scroll to the father to keep until her twenty-first birthday, and warning him particularly not to open it himself or let anyone else interfere with it until that day came round; and although they all felt curious to know her destiny, still they feared to go against the astrologer's commands, which were faithfully kept, the father having locked the satchel up in his trunk, to keep it from prying eyes, and refrained from opening or glancing at it himself, and perhaps it was as well they did not know its contents, for though we may plot against fate's decree we cannot evade or outwit it, or prevent the doom pronounced by perverse destiny, no matter how we strive.

"When Mary had grown up somewhat her mother died, leaving her mistress of the Inn, and she was well loved by all the inhabitants of the hamlet, and though she had a kind word for everyone and greeted customers with a smile, which was for the benefit of the Inn, she was devotedly attached to a young fishing-skipper of the place, named Joseph MacCunigem, who owned a fishing lugger and farm, and was

alone in the world, his father and brothers having paid the deep sea's toll, going down in a storm in the Irish Sea, and his mother died soon after, heart-broken at their loss.

"The men of the Mourne sea-coast are toilers of the land as well as of the sea, being skilful with the nets and steady at the plough, and Joseph worked hard at both to amass some money before marrying Mary, which event was to come off before the year went out, and though she was 'well-to-do,' he wished his own affairs to be in a flourishing condition also, and good luck seemed to favour him in all his undertakings. He made good and profitable catches of fish with his lugger, and the crops of the farm fetched high prices, so that as the year drew to a close he felt proud of the efforts he had made, and satisfied at the result of his industry, and thought with pleasure of the not-far distant day when the 'Maid of Mourne Shore' should be his wife.

"But 'man proposes, God disposes.' Mary's father was seriously ill on the day fixed for the wedding ceremony to take place, so that it was postponed until after the Twelfth of January, which was the great day of Greencastle's winter festival—a postponement that was fated to mean much, as events proved.

"A few days before the Fair, Joseph

went out trawling with the winter fleet, and as the boats sailed off, he waved his hand to Mary, who stood on the pier watching their departure, and promised to be back on the evening tide, on the Fair-eve, be the weather stormy or calm.

"Towards evening it began to blow a hurricane, and the waves were high and fierce, the storm came on so suddenly that the trawlers were caught in the fierce tempest, and ran for shelter up along the coast, some getting into one port and some another, and when all the names of the returned trawlers were ascertained, it was found that one was missing; it was Joseph MacCunigem's boat, which was rather small for the trawling trade. It was last seen on the fishing place making for port when the storm struck the fleet, and the boats lost sight of each other in the gathering darkness.

"There was still hope that the vessel might have reached some small sheltering harbour along the coast, in which there was no means of communicating her arrival to the outside world, but when inquiries were made it was found that the missing fishing-vessel had not come in to any cove or sheltering harbour along the coast, and the truth was fully realised—the vessel had foundered in the storm and the whole crew were lost.

"For some time Mary refused to believe the awful tidings. She could not realise that she had looked on her lover's form for the last time on earth, or that his boat would never again, like a bird on the billows, drift in with the tide to the kindly shore of Mourne.

"And then she thought of his parting words. He said he would come with the flowing evening-tide on the Fair-eve, calm or storm. He always kept his word and she felt he would keep it now, though the winds still raved and the seas rolled mountain high; so leaving the house she went down by the sea-shore feeling that something would happen, she could not tell why, and taking her way across the sands she eagerly scanned the incoming tide, as it flowed rapidly over the shore, nearer and still nearer came the huge white-topped waves, until they reached where she stood, and then one enormous billow dashed a dark object in to her very feet, something still and awful, with livid lips and wide staring eyes, 'twas the corpse of her lover, by one of those strange freaks of fate which sometimes puzzle us, washed into his native bay at the time he had promised to return, although a corpse—the man had hit the tide.

"Moans the Carlinn Bar,
As the waves on Cranfield far,
Break with sob of wildest dread
Mourning for the fisher dead.
Floating there, ah! woe is me,
Drifting in all silently,
He was seized in Manaanan's grip,
When his waves engulphed the ship."

"The shore was slightly raised where Mary knelt by her lover's body; in her grief she forgot the rising tide, which crept slow and stealthy past her on each side, and met, thus completely surrounding her where she knelt with the dead, and then it crept up on them and washed over the corpse, and now she realised her danger, but too late to escape, a wild rush of surf and she was off her feet, clinging to the dead, and then she went under, and when the waters again receded from the shore it left their bodies caught in the rocks.

"The figures of the villagers were seen flying wildly across the shore next morning and, stopping at a nook in the rocks, crowds came from the Fair Green, and women and children ran from their cabins, and gathered round the two still figures half covered with wrack and sand.

"They were carried to the Inn, the crowd passing along in solemn procession with terror-stricken faces, silent, or when one spoke it was in a low hushed whisper, and

when they reached the village and brought their double burthen inside the Inn the old man gave one shrill cry of horror, and fell lifeless on the floor.

"Next day the satchel was taken from the chest, where it had lain ever since the old astrologer had given it to the miller, after casting the girl's horoscope twenty-one years ago, and an awed but curious crowd now gathered around to see what the mysterious paper contained. With great care they cut the stitches of the satchel, afraid of spoiling its contents, and at length came on the small piece of parchment, folded neatly within. It was unfolded and spread out upon the table, where after some little difficulty they were able to decipher its contents, which was the star-gazer's prophecy, concerning Mary—'This girl shall be drowned on her Twenty-First Birthday.'"

Mr. McCreanor with a courtly bow then donned his hat and strode away.

My companion and I sat for some time lost in thought—the low lapping of the waves, the plaintive wail of the curlew seemed to me for the moment a fitting dirge for the Maid of Mourne Shore.

Just then a crack of a whip claimed my attention; on looking round I found my car waiting—had been waiting for some time.

Tears filled my eyes as I bade my friend good-bye, and as my car sped onward round the bend of the road I could see her wave her red pocket-handkerchief in token of farewell.

## CHAPTER VII

To the understanding few, the love of mountains and mountain scenery is ever present. Some rave about the beauties of the Alps, the Pyrenees and Carpathians. William Black and Alexander Smith depict the grandeur of the Scottish mountains. Gertrude Page gives us vivid descriptions of the beautiful mountains and hi ls in far away Rhodesia ; so that we often long for the wings of a dove to fly away and get a glimpse of the beauty so described by her.

In our own land we have many beautiful mountain ranges, in Donegal, Galway and Kerry, but all put together would not compare with the Mountains of Mourne. These are said to be the most wonderfully formed, and distinctive mountain region to be found in any part of the world. As a child I have gazed in wonder at their lofty heights, and as the years rolled on, my love for them grew stronger. Now as the shadows of life lengthen and I dwell in closer communion with the Spirit land, my love for these everlasting peaks grows with the passing years.

One day in Autumn I remember well. It was early morning, the long car waited in the square opposite the Kilmorey Arms Hotel, Kilkeel, sparrows twittered in the ivied porch of the famous hostel, the car trundled out of the square, and away along the great white road to Greencastle. A darkness seemed to have fallen on the land, and all Nature was as if hushed to sleep. Away on the mountain tops a mist hung heavily, and slowly crept down the mountain sides. Looking back, one could see the smoke curling up from the chimneys of Kilkeel and from the houses in the surrounding country. In the midst of this darkness a ray of sunshine fell aslant a corn field, at the base of Bingian, showing up the ripe grain in all its golden glory. A lark rose from its grassy bed and soared upwards, singing a song of praise to its Creator and ours. The opening in the sky closed, and darkness and an awesome stillness pervaded the entire landscape. The momentary glint of sun was as if a small window in Heaven had been opened and the finger of Him who created light out of darkness had pointed to the golden grain on the mountain side, reminding us that God was in heaven and all was well with the world, that the sun would shine again, and before Greencastle was reached, the whole country-

side was flooded with sunshine, showing the mountains in all their purple splendour and the golden harvest fields studded here and there around us.

The Mountains of Mourne have something to teach or instil, but to learn their lesson or catch their influence, one must do more than merely glance at them as though they were a picture book, one must approach them in a submissive spirit and wait for what they have to reveal with the passing hours, and days, and seasons, and years, and having gazed and gone away, one must come back and gaze again. Yes, and all through the weary years I have come at their call and gazed at their greatness and their grandeur. Necessity, however, keeps me in the far-off city, yet in spirit I am ever in kin'ly Mourne. In fancy, on sunny mornings, I can see the sun glint on the highest crags, and the gossamer on heather and brushwood. I can hear the call of grouse and partridge, and peep down at the beauties of the Silent Valley. When the night shadows fall I can see the long winding road from Rostrevor to Kilkeel and hear the crunching gravel under the wheels of the long car as it bears its passengers back to that place of my childhood days—Kilkeel. I can hear the Cassey river singing onward to the sea and the lonely cry of the curlew

as it flies over the Mill-Bay, and then I gaze at the twinkling lights in the homesteads away up in the mountain fastnesses.

Under the shadow of "Knock Cree" (one of the lesser mountains) some years ago in a little thatched cottage lived a worthy pair—brother and sister—by name, Janet and Thomas Ramsey. It was my good fortune to spend my annual holiday with them for very many years. To have gone there once was to want to go again. The charm and kindly simplicity of these old people acted as a magnet to draw one thither. I wish I could describe that little farm which clustered around the humble homestead, or the dear delightful little stream that separated the meadow from the upper land, with its tiny rippling waves as it sallied forth gaily to the sea. Its banks where the dandelion and dog daisies grew, where the butterflies chased one another through the tall grasses was a study for an artist.

An ancient fort enclosed with the usual mound of other days, sat right and tight in the midst of the farm. From that delectable spot could be had an incomparable view of beautiful Carlingford Lough stretching away to the right. The old Castle stands in the foreground, with the ever-circling arm of the mountains behind.

It always seemed to me that Janet and

Thomas had sanctified the place, a quiet peace, and an indescribable "something" met you at every turn. And yet, it was not an ordinary, up-to-date farm—that's where the enchantment lay. So many persons could, and did, see nothing extraordinary about the place—even the winding loanin' nearly a quarter of a mile in length, that led to the cottage would just be considered a loanin', that's all. But to those who see the beautiful in Nature, that lane has no compeer. As you walk along it, you become interested in the wayside flowers. Suddenly you turn a sharp corner, you draw your breath—such a scene of beauty bursts upon your view. You stay your progress, you wonder if the whole thing is an optical illusion! But no! go a little farther, from another angle you get an equally enchanting picture. To walk down that loanin' during a sunset such as we get in late harvest will make one, as it often did the writer, query if the scene were of earth.

Little wonder that a dweller in a big city found there Nature's resting place, an oasis passing fair.

The cottage itself was very primitive, with its green half door, on which very often a rooster stood, and crowed in the news of the day. I often heard Janet say at such

times, "We are going to hear tidings God grant it may be good." The front of the house faced south, and the sun streamed through the ever-open door and window all day long. The door opened on to the kitchen The interior was just the ordinary type of kitchen as seen in the neighbourhood to-day—a settle bed, a century or more old, had a place there. The dresser, with its old-time crockery ware, was as white as human hands could make it. There were old straw-seated chairs that Janet scoured with her own hands once a week; the old spinning wheel and winder, the latter hanging on the wall in solitary state, the large open chimney through which the blue sky was clearly visible, the peat on the hearth and a smiling blackleaded crane, from which a pot or kettle usually hung, made a very homelike scene.

Janet was well past middle age at the time of which I write. She had seen better days. She often spoke of her forbears, who were "the cream of Mourne," but it's hard to hide birth. She had no need to speak of her ancestry. "Birth" was written all over Janet. Janet was a splendid housekeeper. No one ever saw soiled linen or cutlery on Janet's table, and I never knew her rise from the same table without returning thanks. The usual formula was "Thank

God for that good meal," and Janet meant what she said.

In memory I see her bake on a spotless board, her deft, strong fingers going round or knuckling the edges of the oat cake in process of baking, then the griddle would be lowered or raised as occasion required, over the peat fire. Usually another kind of bread would take its place on the bake board and the oat cake would be removed from the griddle on to a toaster in front of the fire. Janet always kept her oat cake in the meal barrel. I never knew why. During baking operations, one day Janet asked me to read her one of the Psalms of David. The large Bible always lay on the kitchen window shelf. Turning over the pages, I was surprised to see a number of pins stuck into the leaves—she saw me look at them and said :

" Lu, I will tell you their history. When my sister Susan came home to die, she loved me to read her a psalm now and then. While doing so, she would interrupt me and say, " Read that verse again, Janet," then she asked me to mark it with a pin. Janet's voice grew husky as she said, " I would not remove those pins for the world, they are part of Susan." Janet was highly thought of, no one but an intimate called her by her Christian name, always by the prefix " Miss."

She was a staunch Presbyterian and kept quoting through the week what she had heard from the pulpit the Sunday before. She had nearly four miles to walk to meeting which she rarely missed, wet or dry.

Janet lived in a world of her own. Unlike my chance acquaintance at Greencastle, Janet disliked the sea, nor did I ever hear her speak of the mountains, but the ever-changing sky and vegetation appealed to her.

"Lu," she said one morning, "the nicest time of day is the dawn. (Janet's hour for rising was 5.30 in summer.) 'Tis beautiful to see the early dew on the leaf; I see God in it."

Again, on winter mornings, she often brought in a twig covered with hoar frost or snow, and her remark at these times was:

"No one can beat the Great Artist, Lu; look at that."

The early dawn was a treat to Janet. I have often seen her through the bedroom window stand with face glorified looking at what she called "the Primrose Dawn." Janet's hand was ever employed in giving food to the stranger. Pedlars, fish men, beggars, were all sure of a bite and sup at her home. In memory I hear her say this to a tinker: "How are you the day, Tammy? Come in, come in, and have something to eat. I've just churned. Will

you have a mug of buttermilk, Tammy?" and Tammy would reply:

"That I will, Miss Ramsay, anything from your hand does me good; God bliss you."

Then a big mug of milk with a generous show of butter on top, together with a farl of oat cake, would be handed him.

Later, I heard her say at the door.

"Is that you, Rosy? I've on the kettle for tea; come right in and have a cup."

Perhaps at dinner hour, Sandy, the fish man from Kilkeel, would drop in, and at one of these times while handing him a chair, Janet would say:

"You're just in time for a drop of broth, Sandy."

Sandy sitting in expectation was already spreading his old handkerchief over his knee to serve as a napkin (he could not be induced to sit at table).

After a time I heard him say—

"Man, that's good, my ould woman thinks she can make broth, but I tell her she should taste Miss Ramsay's broth. She wouldn't know how to shear the vegetables for your broth, Miss Ramsay."

I could see Janet was highly pleased. Somehow to my mind, there's more human nature to be found in a home such as Janet's than City people experience, living as they

do behind a shut hall door. The door shuts out everything—it may be genteel, but I don't think it's in God's plan for us.

Janet was famed for her fowl; she supplied half the people in her neighbourhood with eggs for setting. She took a keen interest in every hen, too, and every hen seemed to know it. The young turkeys were, to Janet, so many babies; she spoon-fed them and made such decoctions for them with nettles, oatmeal, and buttermilk, and they throve so well on this diet that when Christmas time came there was keen competition amongst the buyers for Janet's turkeys.

I remember during one of my visits there one afternoon, I happened to be in trouble of some kind and was brooding over the matter whilst sitting by the fire. I expect I looked—well, just as I felt, when Janet came in from the fields, her apron filled with young nettles for her precious turkeys.

Looking at me she said—

"You're fretting, Lu!"

"I can't help it, Janet," I replied.

Still looking at me she said—

"Do you know God's guiding you, Lu?"

"I do, Janet."

"Well"—after a pause—"can He guide you wrong?"

Then, throwing the contents of her apron

on to the earthen floor, and without waiting for reply, left m to digest the truth of her argument, which happily I did. Many might envy Janet her supreme faith. One of her prayers before a great crisis was: "Let there be no noise," meaning, no exposure.

I often think I hear her say—

> "God moves in a mysterious way
> His wonders to perform."

She could see God's hand in everything. Nothing grieved her so much towards the latter end of her life as being unable to walk to Church. So great was her desire for service that she would retire to the far end of the byre during Church hours, and there, kneeling on straw, poured out her soul in prayer. And God heard and met her there, although the same byre was neither consecrated nor decorated.

God looks upon the heart.

## CHAPTER VIII

Thomas Ramsay, Janet's brother, was "a son of the sod," always at work in the fields which he dearly loved. Unlike Janet, Thomas spoke in the vernacular; he believed in calling a spade a spade; he had no use for balderdash or cutting capers he would tell you. Janet used to say, "Thomas makes himself ridiculous, and he knows better." Anyhow, be that as it may, I have yet to find a kinder man than Thomas. He made one so welcome to his home and it was what he didn't say at these times impressed you most.

Often of an evening when Janet was in the byre milking, Thomas, sitting by the fire lighting his pipe with a piece of live peat held by the tongs, would say—

"Sit up to the fire, Lizzie." (Thomas maintained my name was a tongue twister, so he christened me Lizzie for short.)

"Sit forrit, Lizzie, an' tell me all about Bilfast."

Nothing pleased him better than to hear of the doings of City folk. On one of these occasions, I had been telling him an un-

usually interesting yarn which I could see amused him greatly. Afterwards I strolled out to the fields—I had only gone a short distance when I heard him cry out—

"Lizzie! hoy, Lizzie!"

On returning to the house, I found an old friend of his had just come in, Sammy Colgan by name.

"Lizzie," Thomas said, "tell Sammy that story you were telling me a wee while ago." To have watched Thomas's face while I was repeating the yarn was a treat; he emphasized my remarks by winking with one side of his face in a way I have never seen any one else wink. He frequently interrupted me by shouting—

"D'ye hear that, Sammy? Listen, Sammy. What d'ye think of that, Sammy?" and so on.

Thomas accompanied me, not on the piano, but by slapping his knee in true Mourne fashion, as if he were punctuating the points of the story.

Thomas had been good-looking in his young days. He was six feet high, but at the time of which I write, stooped greatly and had to use his staff, which staff he cut out of the hedge. He usually wore a "baneen," that is a kind of coarse flannel or druggit of home manufacture, made into a short jacket or overall—the baneen was worn by the old

people of Mourne from time immemorial, but I understand it is discarded by the present generation. Like the Greencastle Fair, the "baneen" has become a thing of the past.

Coming in from the fields one day (I had been gathering wild flowers) I met Thomas. He smiled as he saw the flowers.

"You're awfully rich, Thomas," I said.

"How's that, Lizzie?"

"You have millions and millions of wild flowers on your farm."

"Wild flowers, is it? It would take a guy lock of them to pay the cess." *

The "cess" was a never failing grievance with Thomas. He talked of the "cess" night, noon and morning, and I believe the same cess was only the matter of a few shillings yearly. Thinking still of the cess which was to Thomas as the National Debt, he said—

"D'ye know, Lizzie, we want another waar (war) to rise the prices of things."

Happily for Thomas he did not live to see the Great War.

Thomas was always on the look-out for rare plants for me. I remember one day he came in with one such, and looked so pleased as he deposited on the table an exceedingly beautiful plant.

"I got that on the Fort, Lizzie," he

* The Tax.

said. Then he sat down beside me and described its nature, the soil it chose to grow in, etc. It gave him such pleasure to tell me all about it.

"There's not another plant like that for miles around, Lizzie. Take it home and put it in your garden."

"But I have no garden, Thomas," I replied.

"No garden, Lizzie? How's that?"

After my explaining that there were no gardens in the centre of the City he said—

"Well, I'll just put it back where I got it, an' when you come back next year it will be there for you."

Such was the kindly act of Thomas; it was all he could do. I said to him one day—

"Thomas, how does it come you never married?"

He did not reply for some time, then he said—

"I was in love wanst, Lizzie, an' I wanted to marry, but my ould mother was agin it. She said one woman was enough in any house, so I dilly dallied for a while, and then the marrying went aff me."

A shadow crossed the floor as he spoke. Looking round I saw Mary O'Hare (Janet's washerwoman) in the doorway. On observing me she made a curtsey. I never saw anyone curtsey as Mary did—she almost

MARY O'HARE.

*See page 76.*

touched the ground with her knees as she said—

"Beg pardon, Miss."

"Come in, come in," said Thomas. "I was just telling Lizzie I was in love wanst."

"That ye wur, Thomas. I've min' o' the time, it's the guts of fifty years ago, my man. Ye had it badly, too, but the clockin' soon went aff ye."

You could have heard Thomas laugh in the next townland, Mary's joke tickled him so. Next morning Thomas asked—

"Did you see the priest go by, Lizzie?"

"No," I answered.

"Well, he's away there through the fields to Mary Flanagan's," continued Thomas, "She's very bad."

"He's a nice gentleman, that priest, Lizzie. Have you min' of Priest Maguire?"

"I remember him well," I replied. "He was highly respected."

"He was a gentleman, Lizzie; d'ye know, there wasn't a man, woman or child in Mourne that didn't respect Priest Maguire. You'll have min' of Father Keating of the Lower End?"

"I do well," I said.

"You never heard anyone calling Mr. Keating, Priest Keating, did you? Nor you never heard any one call Mr. Maguire, Father Maguire?"

"You are quite right, Thomas, I never did."

"Well, d'ye know the reason? Everybody respected Priest Maguire, but everybody loved Father Keating—man, it would do you good to hear Father Keating talk, he was the kind man, kind to everybody. If you went to his house he would treat you dacently—he knew how."

"That's true, Thomas. I heard my father say he was always sure of a glass of punch when business took him to Father Keating's."

"That's so, Lizzie, an' what's more, he had pipes, long pipes, on a table for everybody that might call."

"Churchwardens," I interposed.

"Yes, that's them, he had a heart of gold, Lizzie, no mistake about it. I must tell you a story I heard about him. It came to his Reverence's ears that two of his hearers were living together not married, an' his Reverence was greatly distressed. They had a family too—these people, some of them grown up. Howanever, Father Keating went to their house to try to get them to marry one another. He saw the woman an' told her what he had heard, and that they must get married. The woman would not listen to his Reverence at all an' at last she said—'I declare to the Lord, Father, I would not take him.' What d'ye think

of that, Lizzie? Howanever, before his Reverence left the house, he got her to consent to marry."

"That happened a long time ago, Lizzie, an'. Father Keating an' Priest Maguire, the good old Priests of Mourne, are dead and gone, but they'll never be forgotten."

"Put on your bonnet, Lizzie," Thomas said one afternoon, "An' we'll go over to Kilbroney and see the grave of the Mourne Giant, Patrick Murphy."

"But Kilbroney is four miles from here, Thomas," I replied.

"Never mind, Lizzie, I'll get Sammy Colgan to drive us over in his gig."

As we were going through the fields to Sammy's, Thomas told me all about the Giant.

"I min' him well, Lizzie," he said, "he was as fine a young man as ever lived. I loved him," he continued, "everybody loved Pat Murphy. He was eight feet ten inches high, and the wonderful part of it was, his father and mother were just ordinary-sized people, not as tall as I am. Howanever, he was took away to be exhibited. He was all over Great Britain. Then they took him to America. After that he was in other foreign countries. He made pots of money, but poor Pat didn't live to enjoy it, he died at the age of twenty-six."

By this time we had reached Sammy's, and very shortly after, seated in the gig, were tearin' over the road to Kilbroney.

"Houl' on, Sammy," Thomas cried out, "till I show Lizzie where Pat Murphy was born," and pointing at the same time to a cottage beside the Cassy water, said—

"That's the spot, Lizzie, take a good look at it. That's where poor Pat lived and died."

"Gee up, Jenny," Sammy said to his mare, and Jenny went off like the wind.

I was seated between the two old men, and owing to the antiquated build of the gig, I was swung about like a pendulum, knocked up against Thomas this minute, Sammy the next. Strange to say, however, neither of the men seemed to notice the antics of the same gig.

Suddenly a motor birled round the corner and slowed down at sight of our conveyance. Finally, it came to a dead stop, Sammy pulling up at the same time.

Its occupants, a lady and gentleman, were evidently tourists, the lady was young, decidedly so, and the gentleman elderly, but dressed in a juvenile make-up, a truly pathetic sight which went to show that he was struggling against the inexorable advance of late middle life.

Adjusting his eyeglass he addressed Sammy.

"We are strangers in the neighbourhood," he said. "Can you tell my wife if there are any relics of the 'Stone Age' to be seen hereabouts?"

Sammy who was chewing tobacco at the moment, twirled the plug from one cheek to the other, looked at the speaker and maintained a discreet silence.

"Or," added the gentleman, "if there have been any geological specimens found in this neighbourhood at any time?" Sammy, who still kept the plug changing quarters in his mouth, looked for all the world as if the man was talking Chinese.

"Most likely," added the stranger, "you have some archæological records?"

"Do you mane," said Thomas, "something that was made before the Flood?"

"Yes, that's it, my man."

"Well," added Thomas (with one of his characteristic winks), "if you will take a peep in the looking-glass you'll see what you're after right enough."

"Gee up," said Sammy, "be the light that shines, Thomas, that's a good wan. Gee up, Jenny."

## CHAPTER IX

"THAT'S the Yelverton Chapel, Lizzie," said Thomas, pointing to a little building on our right.

"I've seen it often, Thomas," I replied.

"Did iver you hear about the marriage that took place in it?" he queried.

"I have a hazy recollection of it," I said.

"Well, when we go home, I'll get Janet to read you about it. She has it all down in her scrap book."

"I have min'," said Sammy, "of hearing my father tell about a priest belonging to that chapel that was trying to raise money for a charity, an' he asked all the farmers roun' about to give him half-a-crown apiece.

"Accordingly his Reverence went roun' his people to collect, and ivery man paid up (an' my father was wan of them). Howanever, there was an ould negger—you'll have min' of him, Thomas? Ould Larry Fegan. Well, he wudn't give a halfpenny to God Almighty. Howanever, his Reverence went to him for his half-crown.

"'Good day, Larry,' said his Reverence, 'I have come for your half-crown.'

"'O! the divil a half-crown have I, your reverence,' said Larry. 'All I have in the house is eighteen pence.' 'Never mind,' said the priest, 'I heard tell of a man that only gave eighteen pence all his life to charity, an' when the man died and knocked at Heaven's gate to get in, a voice from inside asked, who he was, an' when he tould his name, another voice said, "Give him back his eighteen pence, an' let him go to ——" 'Margit! Margit!' Larry shouted to his wife, who was 'down the house' at the moment, 'Give his Reverence half-a-crown, an' be quick about it.'"

"I min' Larry rightly," said Thomas, "his ould brother, Felix, begged through the country, an' when his wife died, he went to the Rector's house to beg money to bury her. The old Rector was dead at that time," continued Thomas. "Howanever, he asked the Rector's son to help him to bury his wife, and to 'sauther' him up a bit, said, 'The Lord send them their health that's dead an' gone. If the ould Rector was to the fore he would give me something to bury Kitty.'"

"Be the light that shines, Thomas, that's just like Felix," said Sammy.

"Woa, Jenny, woa!" We were now at the entrance of the ancient Church and graveyard of Kilbroney. While Sammy was

tying up Jenny, Thomas and I went along to the grave of the Mourne Giant, where Thomas, labouring under deep emotion, reverently removed his hat, and said,

"You're lying there, Patrick, an' no finer boy ever drew the breath of life."

"Be the light that shines, that's true," said Sammy, who had rejoined us. "I was a brave lump of a boy when Pat died. I min' him well."

"I have min' of a kin' act he done wanst to me," said Thomas. "I'll never forget it."

"He was a true son of kin'ly Mourne," I ventured to remark.

"That's it, Lizzie. You've hit the nail on the head."

"In troth you have," Sammy chimed in.

After standing some time at the grave-side Sammy and Thomas left to transact some business, and I was alone with the dead. As I wandered around the old graveyard, I bethought me of a story I heard years before about the bell of St. Bronach.

"For a thousand years a bell was heard to chime in Kilbroney cemetery, but from what exact spot the sound came no one could say, for inquisitive persons who sought to find out the cause of the mysterious ringing were always baffled. But still the unseen bell kept throbbing, pulsing, beating. It seemed

an enchanted sound, and peasants returning from the village at night went fearfully by the graveyard when it sounded on the breeze, and the watch-dogs howled with fright at its eerie tone in the moonlight.

The lore of the unseen bell was as follows. When the bell rang in the morning it was for joy, rung by angel hands ; when it rang before a death it was the Banshee that mournfully tolled—the bell seemed to say :

" TO DIE—TO DIE," in a sorrowful tone that told of coming woe—the notes lingering and dying away in a low, shuddering sob.

And in the house of sickness hope was lost as the monotonous notes of the " Doom Bell of Bronach " came through the still night air.

If the invisible bell tolled at an interment, it promised rest and immortality to the departed soul.

" The untiring Bell of Time still kept tolling from generation to generation, and from age to age, and it seemed probable that its sound would reverberate for all time, for its brazen, beating heart seemed to be one of the few favourites of old Father Time, and the metal seemed everlasting.

But after long centuries beating, its throbbings unexpectedly ceased altogether. Nobody could tell why, or whether it was an omen of good or ill to the people of the

glen. They istened in calm and storm for the sound of the bell, but in vain.

The next generation that arose considered themselves more enlightened than their fathers. They had often heard the wonderful story of the unseen bell, which used to ring of old in the glen, but though they listened no bell-notes came to their ears, and so they doubted the story the old people told, and scoffed at the foolish believers. They called it a fireside tale, or allowed it might be a trick of imagination of the ignorant. The story was clearly impossible, and the rising generation were all sceptical of its truth, and they laughed to scorn the simplicity of the old believers.

And after the lapse of some more years, without the sound of the "Invisible Bell" being once more heard in the valley, the old people began to doubt themselves, and to think that after all they might be wrong, and the young sceptics right, and at last only a few old voteens remained who still believed they sometimes heard the bell-notes on the blast.

In the year eighteen hundred and eighty-five, a large oak tree which stood near the old church in Kilbroney cemetery was blown down during a dreadful storm. It was a noble old "monarch of the woods," that had braved the storm for centuries.

Some workmen were sent to saw it up. They stripped it of the clinging parasites, and sawed off the two great branches which forked at the top, and then the workmen came on a recess in the trunk, and lo! the mystery of time was solved at last, the fabled ghostly bell was discovered. The ring holding its tongue had worn away with the centuries' ringing, and the tongue had fallen down to the bottom of the recess, which accounted for the last fifty odd years' silence of the bell. And the mocking scoffers were dumbfounded and shamed by the extraordinary find.

The newly-discovered bell was taken to the capital and examined by antiquarians, who all agreed that it was of kindred date with the earliest Christian consecrated bells discovered in this country.

Bronach's Bell has been swung anew, and is now used in the Catholic Church at Rostrevor."

Thomas and Sammy were now at the gate. Then I heard Thomas cry out—"Lizzie! hoy, Lizzie."

When we reached home Janet was lighting the lamp (the lamp was run in pulleys from the rafters), her spectacles on, preparatory to reading the weekly paper.

"Janet," Thomas said, "before you read the paper, tell Lizzie about the Yelverton

Marriage." Janet then produced an ancient scrap-book (it had been a ledger in its early day), and from a cutting of a newspaper of a remote date read :

"The Old Yelverton Chapel, situate in Killowen about four miles from Warrenpoint, convenient to the Coast Road to Kilkeel. This ancient Church figured prominently in the most celebrated trial that ever took place in Ireland, commonly known as the "Yelverton Marriage Case." The ceremony of marriage that took place between Major Yelverton (heir to the peerage of Avonmore) and Miss Longworth, the validity of which was the subject of trial, was performed in this old Roman Catholic Church. After a protracted trial which was followed by the newspaper-reading public of the United Kingdom with absorbing interest, owing to the social position of the parties and the romantic and dramatic circumstances detailed in the evidence, the marriage was held valid by a Dublin jury. Several of the incidents in the courtship took place in the Crimea, where Major Yelverton served as an officer during the war and Miss Longworth acted as one of the lady nurses to the sick and wounded soldiers. The parties were of different religious persuasions, and the defence set up by Major Yelverton was that the ceremony which took place in

Killowen was not a legal marriage, but only to satisfy the conscience of the lady. Major Yelverton subsequently married again and then the action was brought. The verdict was announced amidst scenes of great enthusiasm, even the barristers in the Court actually standing up, taking off and waving their wigs; the approaches to the Four Courts in Dublin on the closing day of the trial were thronged and many thousands assembled in the streets outside the Courts awaiting the result of the verdict. The lady at the conclusion of the trial was drawn in a carriage in triumph to her hotel by enthusiastic admirers. All the leading Counsel of the Irish Bar were engaged in the case, and the forensic eloquence displayed on the occasion has never been surpassed. Although the Irish jury upheld the marriage, the verdict was subsequently set aside in the House of Lords."

Thomas, in his early day had been to Liverpool on one occasion. That visit was his only outing, and during my visits to his home (and they were many), Thomas never failed to rehearse each time all he had seen in that City—how a "Lady" followed him through the streets, and how terrified he was of her. Finally she ran him to earth and asked for a drink. Thomas was in a dilemma. At length he complied

with her request, and as they were about to enter the gin palace he said to the "Lady," "as you know the place better than me, go in before me," and when the "Lady" took the lead Thomas bolted by a side door and ran for his life. How he would laugh at that episode after the lapse of sixty years. That story never grew stale.

Thomas paid his first visit to Belfast within a year or so of his death. He had to give evidence at the Courts about some deeds of property. He never tired recounting what he saw and heard in the City. Belfast was such a wonderful place that Liverpool was never mentioned afterwards. He was amazed at the number of trams in our streets. I've seen him stand and count them for long enough, but he could not bear the sound of the street traffic.

"Lizzie, Lizzie," he said, "how d'ye stand that awful noise?" He was greatly interested in the wax figures in shop windows; he had never seen the like before, but what appealed to him most was the number of milk carts on the streets. Leaving my side one day, he hailed one and asked the driver, "if he had sowl all his milk." The milkman enjoyed the joke. During his visit one evening, he was leaning over the little gate in front of my home looking very forlorn.

"You are thinking long, Thomas," I said.

"I am, Lizzie," and there was a tear in his voice as he replied,

"I miss my mountains." After a pause he said:

"Do you see that wee bush up the street, Lizzie? Well! I keep looking at it, it puts me in min' of home?"

Not very long after Thomas went home to that other country, from whence there is no returning.

Sitting in front of his cottage one day while mending a wheelbarrow, he said to his sister:

"I feel weak, Janet." He was brought inside, and the servant man despatched for the Doctor.

"You needn't go, John," he said, "I'll be away before you're back," and he was.

Thomas often said to me:

"I hope I'll not lie long, Lizzie. I don't want to give bother."

Janet fretted for her brother, and survived him only a few years. She was the last of her race, and she wanted Home.

Home! home! the cry of the child, the desire of the aged—Home! No place satisfies the heart like Home.

Janet and Thomas sleep their long last sleep well happed in the Meeting House Green where they lie, mingling with the dear dust of their dead.

## CHAPTER X

Mary O'Hare, Janet's washerwoman, was "a character," a rough diamond, ready-witted and of a kindly nature. During my visits to Janet's house, Mary always tried her best to "divart" me. She often followed me through the fields, and at these times would sit beside me on the banks of the little river and pretend to tell my fortune, read dreams, or perhaps relate an astonishing tale about the Fairies. Mary was well over sixty at this time, but her heart was young, as young as they are made in Ireland. She prefaced all her remarks by saying—"D'ye know what I am goin' to tell ye." From habit she often made use of this phrase, and ended by not telling anything which was very amusing.

Felix, Mary's man, was very ill-natured and hard to live with. Mary "turned her coat" when she married him, and ever after went to the Mass Forth on Sundays. She lived and died a good Catholic, a rattling good sort was Mary. "D'ye know what I'm goin' to tell you," she said to me one day (Janet was out at the moment), "I

always feel light-hearted when I lave my own house. Felix (my man) is that cross, an' he 'girns' when he hears me makin' a joke with a neighbour, an' ye cudn't plaze him in his mate* if ye tried. Ye darn't set down a barefutted cup of tay to Felix. He wud luk at ye—nothing but beef for him. Where the divil wud I get beef for him every day?"

"D'ye know what I'm goin' to tell ye, he cud just lower a loaf while ye wait, he ates, ates on. Someway I think he's no bottom till his stomick, bad luck to the likes of him ye wud meet in a day's travel. God forgive me, but sometimes I wish the mate wud choke him, but, the divil a thing will choke Felix 'barrin' a rope, an' he expects ye to feed him like a fighten cock on bare twelve shillings a week, an' ye might as well expect the pigs to fly up with the hens as expect any more money from Felix. And when he's at his mate, he wud nivir say, 'Hev ye a mouth on ye, Mary?' No! iverything's for hisself. Many's the week I never see beef, 'barrin' ye wud call limpits and wilks beef, but they're a quare lot, Felix's people, there's something wrong with the whole of them. He has a sister has a skellyin' eye, an' another wan is left-futted with both feet, but glory be to God, he's goin' away to the Fishin' nixt week.

* Meat.

I'll get lave to draw my breath for a while. All the same I wudn't want redd of him for always, an' I wudn't let any one run him down. I always stan' up for him among the neighbours, but he's that 'thrawin' that whiles I can't help talkin' about him myself. An' he grinds the life an' sowl out of the childer an' they're all big now. They're afeard to luk out of their own eyes when he's about. It's God's truth I'm tellin' ye. Ye cudn't blow yer nose to plaze Felix."

At this moment Janet returned and shortly after Mary disappeared. Janet usually left Mary in full charge when business took her to Kilkeel, and during these times "Comic Cuts" were not in it where Mary was concerned. I remember one fair day Janet and Thomas had gone to the town. It was washing day and Mary was washing in the kitchen. In memory I see her, see her strong brown arms covered with soap suds, splashing the water about and "yarning" as usual about one thing and another. When Janet and Thomas were well out of the way, Mary lost no time in wiping her arms and tidying her person, and without saying anything, donned a white apron and set off somewhere. In about ten minutes time she appeared holding something under the same apron and looking pleased, as pleased as if she had "won Newry." Then she pro-

duced a concertina and setting it on my knee, said: "Play us up a rattling good tune, Miss." Removing her tub out of the way and getting a disused door that had formerly decorated the piggery she laid it on the earthen floor and started to dance. I've never seen anyone dance as she did. It was more a motion of body than of feet. If she had been in Andalusia, I would have said she learnt the cult of swaying motion there. With one hand she caught up the corner of her apron and the other she held aloft. It didn't matter what tune I played, it was all the same to Mary. "Play us up a horn-pipe," she said. Then she performed a clog dance, or what sounded like one. At this moment, John, the servant man, came in, and there was a clog dance in earnest; poor Mary got the worst of it as he danced her off her feet. Afterwards sitting at the fire (Mary took a wee draw of the pipe on the sly) she asked me—

"Did ivir ye see our Mary Ann, Miss?"

I replied in the negative.

"Well, not that I shud say it, ye wudn't see the likes of her—a fine, tall, dashin' lump of a girl, she was at sarvice at the 'Point,' an' a lady there tuk a fancy to her and axed her to go to Ameriky as nurse to her two childer', an' Mary Ann went, but she thought long, an' nothin' wud do her but

home she wud come, an' her only six months away. She makes a bit of money at the flowerin', but the flowerin's not well paid nowadays. D'ye know, Miss, Mary Ann cud be married any time to a thunderin' fine gentleman, Mr. Larkin, he's up in years a bit, an' was married twice, but what odds ? He made tubfuls of money in Ameriky an' now he's home for good, an' a good home he hes, an' he hes a side car ; he goes to mass on it every Sunday—but side car or no, the divil a bit of her will luk at him. Siz I to her wan day, 'Mary Ann, if ye tuk Mr. Larkin, it wud be a gran' down sitting for ye.'

"'Mr. Larkin, Ma ! Why, he's as ould as the hills.'

"'Ould is he,' siz I, 'Shure, ye'll never hev to pick his bones,' an' she jist turned up her nose at me, but I know who she's after, an' by all accounts he's goin' to Ameriky some of these days, an' that's Pat Flanigan."

"How many children have you ?" I queried.

"Four living an' they wur all born with caps and veils on them, but that runs in our family, for my mother before me was born with a whole shute on her."

At this moment old Jim McGivern, the road man, walked in for a "light" for his

pipe. Mary turned her attention to Jim; meanwhile I slipped out and left them confabbing.

On returning from the shore, a few days later I met Janet in the loanin', she smiled as she said, "You are invited for tea this evening"; then she told me Mary O'Hare was having a bit of a blow-out, a "send-off" party for Paddy and Harry Flanigan, who were going to America the following day. Mary Ann had invited some of the boys, and there was to be a great party entirely (old Felix had gone to the fishing at Kinsale), and as Mary said to Janet, "If missy will come, it will be a bit of divarsion for her."

"But, Janet,"—I said.

"Now, I want you to go, Lu; it will give you something to talk about when you go home. Besides, I would like you to see Mary's kitchen. It has a Boortree (Boartree) roof, and the only one of its kind to be seen in Mourne."

To please Janet I consented to go, and while I was dressing Janet was packing a basket with pats of her delicious butter, eggs as fresh as they are made, and a rich cake which she baked in her oven pot. As Mary lived some distance away, John was sent to pilot me there, and to carry the basket. When I reached Mary's house, she met me at the door, where she curtseyed

again and again. Then I was brought in to the most wonderful place imaginable. Coming in from the sunlight (the kitchen was very dark), I stumbled against what I thought was a pillar in the centre of the floor. Looking up, I discovered it was the trunk of a tree. Later I saw the tree had branches which extended on all sides and served as props for the thatched roof. I wondered if I saw aright, it was so unlike anything I had ever seen or heard of. Surely Mary's kitchen must have been erected in primeval times, but I was told later that there had been many such in Mourne in early days.

"Sit down, Miss, sit down," said Mary, "the girls is reddin' up the room below."

There was a slated end to Mary's house, and as far as I could see, the "reception" was to be held there. Having divested myself of my outdoor garments I sat down to talk to Mary; suddenly I became aware of something unusual, something moving overhead. What was my astonishment to see a number of hens roosting on the branches of the roof tree. I was wearing at the moment a blouse of a rather delicate tint or shade, therefore I was a trifle nervous as to what might happen any moment, sitting as I was under the shadow of Mary's fowl, so I kept changing my position, moving

my seat as far out of danger as possible. However, in a short space of time I was taken "down the house," and there introduced to Mary's daughters. I found Mary Ann all her mother said of her, an exceedingly fine looking girl who welcomed me in true Mourne fashion, and thanked me for coming. The beds had been taken down for the occasion, and a great turf fire was blazing on the hearth. After some time we were seated around the tea table, and if Mary's table lacked "style," if the plates were without d'oyleys, and her cutlery did not bear her monogram, it mattered not. It certainly did not lack the thing that counts, and that is "Heart."

When we had finished tea, Mary put on her spectacles to "read the cups"; that certainly was a funny half-hour. I wish I could remember all she predicted for me. I was to ride in a coach and have a retinue of "sarvants." There was little left in Mary's vocabulary that she did not promise me out of my cup! and this was Mary's idea of greatness—coaches and servants! There was some one at the door. Mary Ann, who was at the window at the moment, said,

"Ma! if there isn't Mr. Larkin comin' in."

"Well, an' if he is, I axed him."

"Oh, Ma!"

"Yes! 'Oh, Ma,' try an' be civil to him,

it's not ivery girl Mr. Larkin wud luk at, so min' yerself."

With this injunction, Mary flew off to meet her prospective son-in-law.

I could hear her blarney to him in the kitchen; Mary was in her element right enough. Then she brought him in and introduced me as a lady from 'Bilfast'—but Mr. Larkin did not seem to be interested in the lady from Belfast, his eyes wandered to where Mary Ann sat.

"Mary Ann," her mother said, "rise up an' show yer manners an' get Mr. Larkin a sate."

"All right, all in good time," said that individual.

While Mary Ann was "showing her manners," Mary gave me a "dunch" with her elbow that almost knocked me off my chair, that "dunch" implied a great deal.

Mr. Larkin had been good-looking in his youth.

Oh, the pity of it! that we must all leave youth behind, but it is more pitiable still when we try to drag youth into old age—it can't be done, we can't hide the milestones of time, try as we will. Mr. Larkin had arrived at that age when many men make shipwreck of their lives, and that age is the last flicker of expiring youth.

On this particular evening, Mr. Larkin

was immaculately dressed, immaculately groomed. Unfortunately he was bald, very much so, and the bald spot was unkind—it had a trick of showing itself unmercifully, but Mr. Larkin did not see it, he felt young, and he meant to win Mary Ann.

## CHAPTER XI

The lads now began to drop in. The Flanagan boys, "the guests of the evening," were the first to arrive, then a fiddler from Tullyframe. (I noticed the Fiddler carried more than his Fiddle—he had a small keg of whiskey, or I should say potheen, under his arm—it was an open secret that most of the potheen at that time came from Tullyframe and Glenloughan.) A number of lads belonging to the neighbourhood and a few sports from Kilkeel made up the party.

It was an amusing sight to watch Mary, who was flying about like a kite trying to get "sates" for her guests. Everyone was in good humour and all seemed as if they were out for a night's "divarsion."

I could see the boys take side looks at Mr. Larkin, whom they christened "Granda," but Mr. Larkin felt as young as any of them at the moment.

The Flanagan boys had had their photos taken, which they passed round for inspection. "Where's my specs?" cried Mary.

In memory I see her look at Pat's photo, which she held at arm's length.

"D'ye know what I'm goin' to tell ye," she said. "If I had to luk for the owner of that picture the divil a bit of me wud know where to get him—I wud have to get a sarch warrant to fin' him." (Such was the elegant drollery of Mary.)

"It's all in your specs," said Pat (who knew Mary was trying to flatter him). "Ye see twice at wanst thro' them, Mary. That puts me in min'," he continued, "my father's the divil for specs, our house is full of them; last fair day he says to me, 'Pat, bring me a pair of specs from the Fair.' Well, I did. I bought him a pair at sixpence, scabbard an' all—of course it was only windae glass was in them, so I thought I wud play a joke on the ould lad. I tuk out the glasses an' put the frame in the scabbard an' handed it to him—he was well plazed, I can tell ye; so he got the paper, an' down he sits, an' on went the specs. After a wee while he says, 'Tare-an-ouns, them's the best specs ivir I had—you've fixed me at last, Pat,' an' he read on for long enough—then he got out his handkerchief to wipe them before putting them back in the scabbard. I can tell you there was a whirlabaloo; after that, I had to clear out—all the same, I nivir heerd him say 'specs' since."

"D'ye know what I'm goin' to tell ye?"

said Mary, as she hung on the kettle; but she didn't tell us anything.

A little later the keg was broached. The fiddler had a bottle snugly hidden in his pocket as well, a portion of which was given to "Granda" (Mr. Larkin). It proved to be "First Shot," and before all was over, poor Larkin was "shot" right enough.

Toasts were then given, and one of the boys from Kilkeel made a rattling good speech, in which he referred to the parting with the Flanagans, who were leaving the home of their youth—the dear shores of Mourne.

Mr. Larkin was then called on to give his experience in America.

"Certainly, certainly; all in good time," said Mr. Larkin, whose speech was a bit thick. "The first shot" had taken effect. He then commenced to take down notes for the address which he was to give later. Billy Morris from Kilkeel made the punch—not only punch, but egg-nog for the ladies.

"What the divil are we going to do for more cups," said Mary.

"Nivir min'," Pat Flanagan replied; "we'll fix that," and fix it he did.

I could see he was after the egg shells, which were converted into receptacles for the potheen which he passed round to the

guests. It was screamingly funny. There was no end of "hob-nobbing"! Each one rose in turn to drink healths—Here's to ye, Mary, an' you Pat! an' you, Harry! an' good luck on your journey, an' t'you, Billy! and so on, till each one present was named. This performance occupied a good ten minutes. Then the Fiddler struck up "Garry Owen," and all hands started to dance the four part reel.

Telling stories was part of the programme; one boy told a yarn about a servant boy from the back of Bingian who came to live with his great grandfather, about one hundred years ago. This youth had never seen a cup or saucer, so, when one such was placed before him, he viewed it from afar, viewed it right and left. Then he whistled awhile, finally (he wanted the tea badly) he lifted cup and saucer together, with the result that the cup fell and got smashed. He sat looking at it for some time, then he said, "Shure, I thought the 'slasher' was stuck to the 'dasher' an' there's the wee crock broke."

At this stage Billy Morris was asked to sing. He had a beautiful voice, and he gave us that heart-stirring melody—"Lovely Mourne Shore." For an encore he sang, "A Farewell to Mourne."

I'm leaving thee, Mountains of Mourne,
For the land of the golden West,
And all that awaits me out yonder,
Shure 'tis Mourne I shall ever love best.

The last verse ran :—

I shall love thee for ever and ever
" Dear Mountains that roll to the sea,"
Good-bye ! Och ! my heart sure 'tis breaking
For the Far West keeps calling to me.

Everyone present was greatly affected ; Mary Ann was in tears and the Flanagan boys had meanwhile gone outside :—

Good-bye ! Och ! my heart sure 'tis breaking,
For the Far West keeps calling to me.

The refrain was sung again and again. Mary, in describing it afterwards, said, " There wasn't a dry tear in the place." Mary Ann sobbed still. I saw her mother take a long look at her. The game was up —the state of affairs was obvious to all. Poor Mary was crestfallen. As far as Mr. Larkin was concerned, that individual was oblivious to what was happening, so occupied was he in preparing his speech. However, in a few minutes time, the Fiddler came to the rescue, and in dancing a polka, the sorrows of the future were forgotten in the joys of the present.

There was more punch, and more egg-nog, after which Mr. Larkin rose to give the

intending emigrants his impression of America and the Americans after a sojourn of twenty-five years in that country.

"Here, Mr. Larkin," said Billy Morris, handing him a bottle, "take a pull, man; it will steady your nerves." Poor man, in a short time he forgot notes and all else; the boys cried, "Go on, Mr. Larkin, go on."

That was a funny speech, there was neither beginning nor end to it. He wanted, however ("shot" and all as he was), to magnify America and the Americans. And he commenced by saying that the American people were tall, you wouldn't find a man there shorter than Pat Cullen's corn stack, and the American women—yes, the women—they were as long—as long as a wet Saturday. Mr. Larkin's audience were appreciative, they kept shouting, "Hear, hear," "Bravo," and so on.

"And the grain," continued Mr. Larkin; "the grain grows to the height of this house."

"The Lord presarve us," said Mary.

"But you ought to see the size of an American field," he continued. "I was looking at one on a certain occasion and I asked a man what might be the size of it. He said, 'If I went to the next neighbour a thousand miles away, he might be able to tell me—but this man said he thought

nobody could tell—for it was bounded on the East by the Atlantic Ocean and on the North by the Arctic region and on the South by the South pole, and some one had been trying for half a lifetime to find out what lay on the West of it.' "

Just then Mr. Larkin came to a full stop and looked as if he were about to fall—Mary ran for a chair.

"It's just the hate,"* said Mary. "Sit down, Mr. Larkin."

A vehicle now pulled up at the door. Someone said, "There's Sammy Colgin."

Mary flew to the door to bring Sammy in.

"Be the light that shines, what's all this about ? " said Sammy, as he saw Mr. Larkin incapacitated.

"It's just the hate, Sammy, just the hate," said Mary.

As might be expected, Sammy got a "Johney" out of the bottle, two or three Johneys in fact, when there was more hob-nobbing and drinking of healths. Later, the boys made Mary and Sammy dance a hornpipe, the guests, meanwhile, catching hands and dancing around them in true Mourne fashion.

It was getting late.

"Be the light that shines, Missy, we'll have to be going." (Thomas had sent Sammy to drive me home.)

*Heat.

After bidding good-bye and "God-speed" to the Flanagans, we set out on our journey. It was a glorious moonlight night. Coming out of the light shed by tallow candles into the beautiful expanse of sea, and sky, and land, bathed in shimmering silver was like entering Heaven—never shall I forget that scene—all the earth was white.

*Weird in moonlight's silvery sheen.*

Carlingford Lough looked like an immense mirror. The Newry Packet was sailing over the silver sea—afar, the twinkling lights of Greenore; I was as one in a dream, then I heard Sammy say—

"Gee up, Jenny," and as Jenny turned round the bend of the road, I saw in the distance "the lights of home."

## CHAPTER XII

SAUNTERING through Kilkeel some time ago, after a lapse of years, I found many changes, I looked in vain for old friends, for the old familiar faces—a new generation had meanwhile arisen, and I was as a stranger in a strange land. Thinking still of the dear long ago I was led by an irresistible or unseen force to the bridge that spans the river. As I stood looking down at the little eddying pools I felt the river had not changed. It still flowed to the sea. Memory brought me back to a day, when, a child of five summers, I wandered from home, was lost; houses, back yards, all my usual haunts had been searched but in vain. Not till late in the afternoon was I discovered, when I was brought up the street, a bedraggled-looking little object. Some one cried out to my father, "Where did you find her?"

"Up the river," was the reply. I have been up the river in memory often since, and to-day I have a desire to follow its windings.

I miss the gorgeous foliage above the bridge. As a child I loved to look at the delightful, high, over-hanging branches that met and caressed and leaned down to kiss the dancing water. In memory I see the sunlight playing on the thousand and one poplar leaves that fluttered in the summer breeze. All that beautiful greenery is gone to-day. Oh, the pity of it!

I make my way up by the margin of the river and look into the cool depths of the water. I can see the little worn stones lying in the river's bed. I can hear the crooning voice of the water moving ever so slowly, and as I stand listening to its murmured song I become unconscious of the passing of time.

"Hev ye lost anything, Mem?" The speaker, an old man, stood looking at me through an opening in the hedge. I noticed he held a scythe in his hand.

"No," I replied, "I am just renewing an old friendship with the river."

"Aye," said he, "it's a purty river right enough, but it gets nicer farther along."

By way of conversation I remarked:

"That old bridge has seen a lot of changes in its time."

"Aye," he replied, "the town's most rebuilt, and the ould people that I min' are nearly all away, but there's always ould

people comin' on." I noted he kept sharpening his scythe all the while with a stone.

"But, someway," he continued, "the ould people nowadays are not like the folk I used to know, they dress up like the young wans. Ye wudn't see a white cap with frills on any of the ould women now. They're all figareyed up like fashion plates—false teeth, an' wan thing an' another. In my young days," he added, "the people had some wit, an' d'ye know they were far friendlier. There was no 'put on,' but the folk roun' about here are far better off than they used to be. They all hev loads of money now. D'ye know what I heerd a man say wan day? Well, it was this, he said that 'Civilisation was the curse of humanity.' I may not be tellin' it right, but that's as near it as I can go. Now," he continued, "d'ye see that bank beyont? The bank of the river! Well, everything grows natural like on it, nature gets leave to follow its own bent. The dandelion an' the daisies are there, an' the tree branches grow as God made them, an' aren't they purty? Well, supposing Mr. Falloon bought that same bank. What wud he do? He wud send his gardener to trim the hedges, cut away all the green stuff an' there wudn't be left what would cover a sparrow's nest. That's what civilisation does. An' it's jist

the same with people. Give me the ould days an' ould friends."

"What age do you happen to be?" I queried.

"I was seventy-five Lammas* last," he replied, "I was born in the townland of Moyadd."

"I used to know people who lived there," I said.

"Well, take it from me, there nivir was a bad man or woman came out of Moyadd."

"There were Fairies in Moyadd in olden times," I said.

"Aye, that there was. I hev min' of my grandfather telling that he saw the Fairies many a time. They had a great wish for my grandfather, an' they done him many a good turn, but they had a spite agin a man in Drumcrow, an' they stole his wife away wan night, an' he was in great distress about her, but wan mornin' when he got up, he found a wee note under the door, an' it was from his wife, saying that on a certain night she would pass the house with the Fairies, and he was to be somewhere about so that she cud run to him, but he wasn't to speak or move. Right enough on that night a band of Fairies came along, all riding wee white ponies, and the woman betwixt them. When the man saw his wife he ran forrit to grup her before she would pass,

*August.

but the Fairies prevented him an' they galloped by. They knew then that the woman had betrayed them an' they 'kilt' her on the way, an' cut her in pieces, an' nixt mornin' her man saw bits of what had been his wife here and there along the road. That's what happened. It doesn't pay ye to meddle with the wee people. They're quare gentry. Here's a bit of a varse for ye.

There's Fairies in Moyadd, "God bliss them,"
Shure they live in a crooked thorn tree,
And they'll rain ye down goold if ye wish it,
That's betwixt you an' me, betwixt you an' me.

"It's getting on for twelve, Mem. I'm away to my dinner. Good-bye. Maybe you'll fin' a wee fella up the river. Good luck."

"Kin'ly Mourne," I said, as I watched the old man hobbling to his home. "North, South, East or West, 'tis ever the same in Kin'ly Mourne."

I wend my way by the riverside and follow its course to the wooded banks on the mountain road.

From a scenic point of view the stately "Yellowwater" far excels this river. The grandeur of the former is beyond my pen to describe, as it wanders through the mountain passes, tumbles through the Salmon Gap, takes its course along the Happy and Silent Valleys. Magnificent beyond the telling is

it, as it majestically sweeps past "The Green" and by the Nut Banks, but by preference give me my own little river, because memories cluster there—memories of childhood's days, of one little playmate and another who have long since passed into the Silent Land, and so as I walk alone by the river to-day, thinking of them all, I wipe away a tear.

"Backward, turn backward, O Time! in thy flight,
Make me a child again just for to-night."

Memories of childhood are the last thing to die in the human breast. They are the warp and woof of life. Therefore, they abide with us for ever. A kiss or caress given to a child will be remembered in the after years, perhaps at a time when the heart is low and the world cold, and the memory of that caress will be as a river running through a desert land, or as the morning dew on the parched leaf.

## CHAPTER XIII

Mourne has given sons to make Empire —the name of Francis Rawdon Chesney takes rank in the foremost files—Francis was born in the townland of Ballyvea, Lower Mourne, on 16th March, 1789.

We read of him—"His first toy was his father's pistol, which he loved to carry to bed with him."

His father, Captain Chesney, was a revenue officer, commander of the Coastguards, and had charge of the coast from Cranfield to Newcastle—no light task—seeing that the people, almost to a man, were smugglers. Those were the days of the Morgan Rattler. Captain Chesney held himself aloof from his neighbours and not without reason. It would have been embarrassing for him in his official capacity to enjoy the hospitality of smugglers, to drink the fine claret and cognac, the glorious old port and sherry which he knew had slipped through his fingers. At that time whiskey was plentifully distilled in the mountains, but the stills were carefully concealed from the gaugers. Contraband casks of wine or spirits were

often buried in the garden of a Mourne homestead. The fortunate purchaser of an old holding would sometimes to his delight turn up a hogshead of fine mellow port. The squireens of those days were a jovial, rollicking set such as Charles Lever loved. In return for entertainment, however, the guest was in honour bound to shut his eyes and ears. Thus Captain Chesney kept away from all such, therefore young Chesney's early home was simple and homely, with few amusements. Visits no doubt were paid by the ladies, who rode on a pillion behind their husbands or brothers, and dismounted on the great stone block which stood beside every hall door.

Captain Chesney obtained for his nine-year-old son the appointment of sub-lieutenant in his own corps of yeomanry; he was ten years of age when the rebellion broke out, and Chesney attired in his little uniform, felt quite a man. The Mourne Infantry were ordered to Newry. Mrs. Chesney, aware of her son's warlike propensities and very properly desirous of keeping such a mere child out of danger, took away his boots and stockings after he had gone to bed, and the detachment marched off without him. Francis, however, who neither then nor at any subsequent period could be deterred by any

surmountable difficulty from what he considered the path of duty, feeling greatly aggrieved at not being able to accompany his corps into active service walked barefooted the whole twenty miles, and greatly to the surprise of his father put in an appearance while the officers were at mess, where he was, of course, received with acclamation.

Young Chesney was mischievous as a boy. We read of him playing a joke on the village physician, Dr. Adderly. The doctor was a character in his way, and was to be met everywhere, riding through the country in his flapping hat and short cloak, wherever his services were required. Riding up to Captain Chesney's one day to attend Mrs. Chesney, he was saluted by two miniature cannons which Francis and his brother had planted on either side of the avenue. The report startled the doctor's horse, and he was borne up to the house at a most undignified pace, minus his hat, and his cloak flying behind him to the amazement of the beholders. His dignity was sorely compromised and he complained to the boys' father, which, of course, resulted in a good flogging for the delinquents.

Mr. Waring was the rector in Chesney's young days. Clergymen at that time took parish work remarkably easy. Rector War-

ing was one such—a man of learning who told a good story, and enjoyed his port. He was to be seen every Sunday morning jogging along on his trusty cob from the Rectory to the Parish Church in Kilkeel, calling at the Post Office for the weekly newspaper, which he afterwards smuggled into the reading desk, when, as soon as Quail the Clerk, had given out the long Psalm which preceded the Morning Prayer, the Rector would eagerly unfold his treasure and would be deep in Napoleon's latest victory until recalled to attention by the sudden stopping of the singing. His sermon would usually be a commentary on what he had just been reading.

We find Francis at the age of fourteen going to Woolwich, and to show the slow method of travelling, the following is a copy of a letter written at that time :—

"We sailed in the Packet from Warrenpoint on Saturday, but the wind not being favourable, and the passengers not having provisions enough, we came back again, and on Sunday we sailed again ; we had a fine passage, and on Tuesday we reached Liverpool ; then by coach, thus reaching London at 6 o'clock, Thursday evening."

Unfortunately for Francis he was not qualified for admittance to Woolwich in point of height, so he was placed at a good

school to grow. Afterwards he went to a Royal Military School at Portsmouth. Six years later, he was appointed to a Lieutenancy in the Royal Artillery. About this time (1814), while Chesney was on furlough in Mourne, a great storm visited the coast. Quite forty fishermen lost their lives. Chesney happened to be contiguous to the shore at the time when a Mourne woman in vulgar parlance cried out to young Chesney—"the boats are a lossin'." Chesney seeing a man struggling in the water, swam out to him and after the greatest possible difficulty succeeded in bringing him to shore.

The scene was immortalised in an old ballad thus :—

"Great praise is due to Captain Chesney's son,
In the middle of all danger to the Quay he did run,
And swam o'er the waves like Leander of old,
And of young Hughey Purdy quickly took hold," etc.

It was always a subject of regret with General Chesney that he never saw active service with the Army, but if Chesney cannot claim our admiration as a fighting soldier, he holds a foremost rank as a pioneer of the lines of communication between the different parts of our great Empire.

He was the founder of the overland route to India. He demonstrated the practicability of the Suez Canal, which he lived to see completed forty years later. He was

named "THE FATHER OF THE SUEZ CANAL," and if Chesney, the great explorer, failed to carry out that other road—his darling project of a second route to India by the Euphrates—it was through no fault either in his own perseverance and zeal, or in the feasibility of the plan.

With marvellous flexibility he adapted his efforts to every change of front, first with the scheme of river steamers, then with railways. He plied the English, Indian and Turkish authorities, won every point at Constantinople, settled every detail of the route on the spot, brought his plans to a state of perfect completeness, only to find himself checked and routed each time by the resolve of the British Government to have no hand in the enterprise. England has suffered much thereby, and the project has remained a project.

Indomitable energy and a resolute belief in the principle of never giving up were among General Chesney's characteristics, and he possessed them as completely at eighty as he did when he first set out to find his way to the great river forty years before. It was in this extreme old age that he made the discovery that to climb a mountain of three thousand feet, or to ride over a rough country for twelve hours produced a novel sensation of fatigue.

He could not realise that he was growing old. In his declining years, he took up residence in his old home, "Packolet," in Ballyardle, within two miles of Kilkeel.

Wet or dry, the General and his family walked those two miles to Church every Sunday and back again (and very often walked in for evening service as well), while his servants rode in a wagonette or car. Very frequently his domestics would drive past him on the way to Church, when he, the General, would give them the salute. As a child I could not understand why he walked while his servants drove. Nor could I imagine why he was always writing, or what he was writing about during sermon time in Church. I understood later, he was taking down notes from the Rector's address. He was a very familiar figure in Kilkeel in my youthful days, a thin, wiry little man, greatly stooped, with such a kind face and pleasing manner. He was greatly beloved by his countrymen.

He passed away peacefully at the age of eighty-three. His monument stands in the quiet little churchyard of Kilkeel, and the people round about are proud to show the passing stranger the grave of the great General, son of the old Captain, whose name has been a power in the little Kingdom of Mourne for more than a hundred years.

## CHAPTER XIV

One other maker of Empire, Charles Russell, Lord Chief Justice Russell, of Killowen (1832–1900), was born, if not exactly in Mourne, only ten miles removed from it. Mourne people claim Lord Russell, for they will tell you he was raised in Mourne, having spent his early years (the years that count) in beautiful Killowen. As a boy he was a handsome, bright-eyed, serious-looking lad, and on occasions defiant.

We read of him: One day the servant threatened to report him to the governess.

"Do," said he, "I'll chalk the way for you," and suiting the action to the word, he got a bit of chalk and drew a line from the kitchen to the schoolroom. One afternoon when he, his brother Matthew, and young Pat Murphy (the Mourne Giant), were playing in a boat on the shore, the tide came suddenly in, and the boat, which had neither sails, oars nor rudder, drifted, and was blown out towards the sea. Murphy cried, Matthew prayed, Charles whistled. The whistling was heard, and the lads were rescued.

Charles was sent to a day school, afterwards to St. Malachy's College. While at St. Malachy's, Russell and another boy were tyrannised over by a boy three years their senior. This youngster came from Castlewellan, and compelled his "henchmen" to call him Lord Castlewellan. One day in a spirit of revolt, they called him Lord "Castlevillain," and got soundly thrashed in consequence by the young despot.

When Charles Russell was an apprentice, he was frequently consulted on legal points.

A landlord in Killowen had enclosed a space (known as Commonage), building a wall around; the people in the neighbourhood resented what they looked upon as an invasion of their rights. Charles Russell was consulted. He said that the landlord's conduct was unjustifiable. The landlord disregarded all remonstrances. One day a large concourse of people assembled in the neighbourhood of the enclosed commonage; Charles Russell went to "look on." Suddenly, the landlord, accompanied by a crowd, was seen in the distance; the peasants waited their arrival on the scene, and then with great coolness and deliberation, and without uttering a word, tumbled the wall to the ground. It was never raised again.

When the day came that he, Charles

Russell, was Lord Chief Justice of England, his biographer writes of him :—

"One day, after luncheon, he stood with his back to the fire and his judicial robe drawn around him, a picture of manliness and dignity. He was waiting for the attendant to announce that the Jury were in the box. It was on this occasion he told me of the throwing down of the wall, enclosing a commonage at Killowen. 'What struck me,' he said, 'was the calmness, the dignity of the people, there was no speechmaking. They waited patiently until the landlord arrived on the scene, and then' (at this moment the attendant entered and said, 'My Lord, the Jury have come in.' Russell took not the least heed of the interruption, but went on), 'threw down the wall. What struck me was the silence of the people and (with a slight oratorical wave of the hand) their action.' He then strode off to his Court. I followed and could not help smiling, as I saw him taking his place with judicial gravity and every one rising to receive him, when I thought of the absolute relish with which a moment before he had been telling me the story of 'lawlessness' at Killowen in the days of his youth."

Most people are familiar with the wonderful career of Charles Russell, how he rose step after step, until he became Lord Chief

Justice of England. He rendered important services to the Empire by his successful arguments in the arbitration proceedings between the United States (of America) and Great Britain regarding the Seal Fisheries in Behring Straits. His services in this respect were acknowledged by conferring on him the Grand Cross of St. Michael and St. George. Later, he was appointed one of the arbitrators in determining the boundaries of British Guiana and Venezuela. This award was in favour of Great Britain and was remarkable for the fact that it was arrived at unanimously.

No English lawyer ever excited in America or on the Continent of Europe the admiration he did.

Fate was kind to Charles Russell, but character made the man. "Thoroughness" was his motto, and he carried that into every detail in life. He was dignified without being pompous, he never made an enemy or offended opposition. Charles owed a great deal to his upbringing; his was a home where piety reigned. We read that Sunday was "a day apart"—his parents would not allow card-playing or even pianoforte playing, other than to accompany a hymn, on that day. Reading, and perhaps some mountain climbing were the only recreations.

All through life Charles Russell's dearest

memories twined around his early home, that Killowen which he loved so well.

. . . .

Mourne has not only given Sons to make Empire but to keep Empire. Most nobly did they respond to their country's call in the Great War, many of whom, alas, made the supreme sacrifice, and they, having given their all, lie to-day on the far-off shores of France. All honour to our glorious dead. Others performed heroic feats at the war.

Let me write of a day when all Mourne was glad, the sun, too, shone his brightest, while on every face was reflected the glory of an inward pride; for on that day each and all had assembled to honour their countryman—Mourne's Youngest Illustrious son, who by his daring deeds has added fresh laurels to the country of his birth—gallant Hanna, V.C.

*Printed by Jarrold & Sons, Limited, Norwich, England*

DATE DUE

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

UNIVERSITY PRODUCTS, INC. #859-5503

BOSTON COLLEGE
3 9031 026 89671 2

# BLACK BEAUTY

## An Enthralling Story of the ups and downs of a Horse's Life.

By

## ANNA SEWELL.

This is the best animal story ever written, and is specially recommended by the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Over TEN MILLION copies have been sold, and it is known as the eighth best seller in the world.

---

**An Edition de Luxe of a famous Story**

# BLACK BEAUTY

## The CECIL ALDIN Edition

Full of charming plates in colour specially painted by *Cecil Aldin*. Size 9×7, 292 pages. Cloth gilt. Photogravure end papers. **10/6** net.

**THE REWARD EDITION.**
Large Crown 8vo. Cloth. **6/-** net. Nicely illustrated in colour and duotone.

**THE POPULAR EDITION.**
Crown 8vo. Cloth. **3/6** net. With frontispiece.

**THE GIFT EDITION.**
6½ × 4½ in. Cloth gilt. **2/6** net. With 13 illustrations in line by Blampied, and an appreciation and life of the author by William T. F. Jarrold.

**THE FILM EDITION.**
Illustrated. As the Gift Edition, but cheaper paper and binding. **1/6** net.

**THE POCKET EDITION.**
Foolscap 8vo. **2/-** net.

**THE CHEAP EDITION.**
Demy 8vo. Paper covers. **1/-** net.

---

JARROLDS PUBLISHERS (LONDON) LIMITED.